

THE STORY OF A FOOTBALL SEASON



By
GEORGE H.
BROOKE





A FORWARD PASS—UPPER DOTTED LINE SHOWS THE PASS, AND LOWER DOTTED LINE SHOWS COURSE OF LEFT END, WHO HAS GONE FORWARD TO RECEIVE THE PASS

**THE STORY
OF A FOOTBALL SEASON**

The Story *of a* Football Season

BY

GEORGE H. BROOKE

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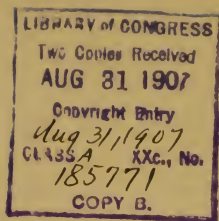
ADVISORY COACH, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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	PAGE
A FORWARD PASS	Frontispiece ✓
AN ON-SIDE KICK	76 ✓
A PUNT FROM BEHIND GOAL	158 ✓
CARRYING BACK A PUNT	174 ✓
DIAGRAM I. Positions on Simple Attack and Defence.....	18
DIAGRAM II. A 'Bunch' Forward Pass	31
DIAGRAM III. A 'Single' Forward Pass.....	32
DIAGRAM IV. Quarter-Back Kick	34
DIAGRAM V. Defence for Punt	49
DIAGRAM VI. 'Bunch' Forward Pass near Goal	51
DIAGRAM VII. An On-Side Kick	53
DIAGRAM VIII. Fake Kick through Line	55
DIAGRAM IX. 'Skiddoo' Forward Pass	62
DIAGRAM X. Zones of Attack.....	69
DIAGRAM XI. The Kick-Off	95
DIAGRAM XII. Defence for 'Right Formation'	128
DIAGRAM XIII. Defence for 'Left Formation'..	130
DIAGRAM XIV. Defence for 'End-Over Left'...	132
DIAGRAM XV. Defence for 'Tackle-Over Left'	134
DIAGRAM XVI. Defence for 'Big Shift Left' ...	136
DIAGRAM XVII. 'Skiddoo' On-Side Kick.....	154

The Story of a Football Season



CHAPTER I.

“WELL, young fellow, you have a great chance this year. We need a good quarter back around here,” spoke Buck Owens, the coach, to Kid Cross, the freshman.

It was a warm day in September, and a couple of weeks before college opened. The squad had been summoned back for preliminary work, in preparation for the hard season ahead. Some thirty or forty candidates, clad in light running suits and football shoes, were out on Cooper Field, scattered around, kicking and passing several footballs, making a lively scene.

THE STORY OF A

Frank Cross, the big centre rush, a veteran of three years' standing, had just brought up his younger brother, and introduced him to the coach. The two brothers were an odd contrast; the older was a great serious-looking chap, splendidly and compactly built, as big and square and dark, as the younger was small and wiry and blond.

"I hope you can make something out of the Kid," said the big fellow, winking. "You might do it, Mr. Coach, if you beat him around enough."

"Get out there, and let's see if you can catch a football," suddenly said Coach Owens, turning to young Cross. "That's what you'll have to do, so you might as well start in right away."

"By George," he continued, as the brothers walked away, addressing Nick O'Connor, the little trainer, and Jimmie

FOOTBALL SEASON

Gibson, the tall captain, who stood beside him, "I hope that boy does make good; we need a quarter back in the worst way. Take a ball, Jimmie, and kick him a spiral or two, and let's see what the Kid can do."

At that instant the group was joined by Jim Mowbray, the famous ex-tackle, who had never been known to miss the first day of the season, and, winning or losing, was always on hand with the same enthusiasm. He shook hands with the coach, and gleefully slapped Nick O'Connor on the back.

"Well, what do you experts think of 'em? Is the new material any good?" cried Mowbray, speaking to both at once.

"They look like winners to me, this year, Jim," cheerfully answered Nick O'Connor. "We've only got four of the regulars back, but there are some good subs left over, and there are a likely look-

THE STORY OF A

ing lot of colts in the new bunch. Of course I'm too old-fashioned to care much about that crazy forward pass, and I have always stood for the big brawny kind of football players,—regular bruisers, you know; but I guess maybe I can get some speed out of this bunch. That is what we need. We've got to lick Sussex anyhow," and the little trainer winked at the big ex-tackle, who laughed approvingly.

"Well, what do you think of them, Buck?" asked Mowbray, turning to the serious-faced coach.

"Jim," replied Buck Owens, soberly, "we've only got a few veterans back, and you know what these new rules are. It's no cinch to break in a lot of greenhorns, and that is one reason why we issued a call for candidates to come back early for this preliminary work. 'Silent' Gibson, out there, says we are going to have the great-

FOOTBALL SEASON

est team in the country. I like to see the captain enthusiastic."

"Well, coach," said Jim Mowbray, nodding his head fiercely, "if the stuff is in 'em we'll get it out of 'em, all right."

Down at one end of the field, Captain Gibson was punting high spirals to Kid Cross and little Rudge, substitute quarter back of the year before. All of the veterans had stopped to watch them. The loss of Stevie, the brilliant quarter back of the last season, had been a severe one, and no one knew better than the veterans what it would mean to have someone who could take his place. Young Rudge, at quarter, had never shown the brilliancy that would lead a team to victory. The fame of young Cross as a schoolboy player had preceded him, and as he gathered in Gibson's long punts, and handled himself with the confidence and smartness that prom-

THE STORY OF A

ised well, Buck Owens, the coach, was already in his imagination picturing him as the brilliant field leader, who would drive his team to victory.

As it was the first day, and very warm at that, the coach soon sent the squad in, with the exception of a few big men, whom the trainer kept out longer, in order to work off their surplus fat.

“Well, Buck,” said Jim Mowbray to the coach, as they strolled off the field together, and down toward the training house, “you’ve got your chess board and your chess men. What moves are you going to make? It is up to you, old man, and don’t forget that we are all back of you.”

“I know all that, Jim, and I will call on you for assistance very soon. By the way, stay out and take dinner with us to-night at the training house. I’m going

FOOTBALL SEASON

to give the fellows a blackboard talk on the new rules."

Kent College was a well known institution, which gathered students from all parts of the country, and had always been celebrated for its football teams. Situated on a high hill in the country, its magnificent campus gave ample room and space for the great buildings that stood in a half moon around the brow of the hill. Cooper Field, a splendid athletic enclosure, was situated in the rear of the college buildings; and on an eminence to the left, as you approached the field from the college, stood the trim little training house, where the Varsity squad lived during the football season.

When Coach Owens and his party arrived at the training house, the players were in the basement getting their baths and rubs-down. Nick O'Connor was in

FOOTBALL SEASON

his element here, and busily ordering and arranging. The coach and Jim Mowbray stood curiously regarding and discussing the physical proportions of the various candidates, as they approached in white-limbed array the scales where the trainer was weighing them in. Kid Cross tipped the balance at 142, and right behind the Kid towered a raw-boned giant. When he stepped on the scales, they flew up with a bang, and the figures were set at 222.

“Holy smokes, who’s that?” ejaculated Crawford.

“That’s the big countryman from up State,” said the coach. “Gibson saw him down here the other day taking his examinations for the law school, and persuaded him to come out and try for the team. His name is Lawson. I don’t believe he’s ever played any football, but he looks like the goods.”

CHAPTER II.

THE coach stood at the blackboard in the football class-room of the training house, with a piece of chalk in his hand. He was on a raised platform, and down below sat the candidates for the football team. Buck Owens was the square-jawed type of football man who is so common in our American colleges, and in his day he had been a famous dodging and kicking half back. While his jaw gave evidence of his determination, his blue eyes were full of the enthusiasm and life which is an attribute of the leader. As for Nick O'Connor, the trainer, a prominent alumnus had once said, at an annual dinner, that Kent was going to keep Nick until he died, and that when he passed away into the happy hunting grounds of football trainers, they

THE STORY OF A

were going to hang his mummy in the trophy room.

“Well, boys,” began the coach, “here we are at the beginning of another football season. You are playing for the honor of a great college. I am going to do everything that I can to teach you the game, and I will have other men to help me; but I want to tell you right now, that it is up to you fellows first of all, and that you must go into everything with your whole heart and soul. I never yet have seen a football star that was made by any coach. He made himself; he took responsibility and originality upon himself, and he thought it out for himself. The new rules have made head work on the part of individuals, and on the part of the man who gives the signals, more important than ever before in the history of football. We will have a lot more talks before the

FOOTBALL SEASON

season is over. I am only going to tell you to-night something about the general theory of the game under the new rules, so that you will realize the tremendous importance of the preliminary work which is now occupying our attention on the field, and will do so for the next few weeks.

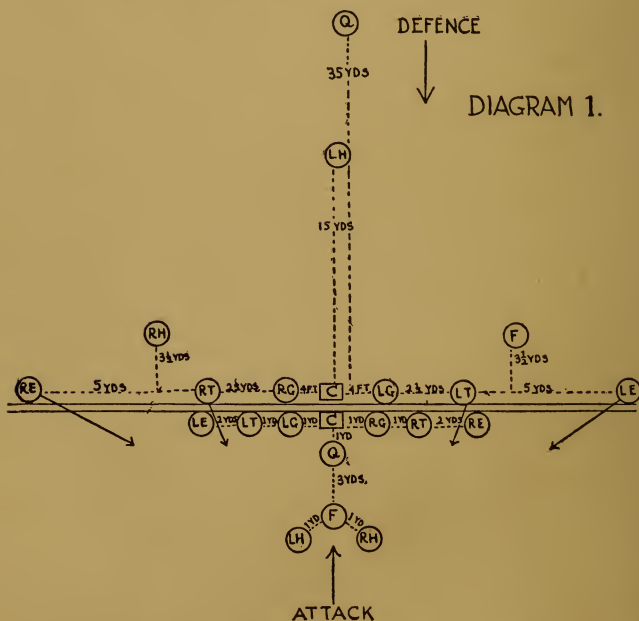
“The positions of the players on attack are restricted by the rules. There is no restriction at all where the defending players shall stand, and they can be placed in the best positions to resist the expected attack.

“The attacking side must have at least six men on the line of scrimmage; if one of the five centre men is taken out of the line, he must be set back of the line five yards. If one of the end men is brought back, then he, or one of the backs, must stand outside of either end of the line. The four

THE STORY OF A

back field men can be placed in any position at all.

“Diagram 1, which I have drawn here



POSITIONS ON SIMPLE ATTACK AND DEFENCE.

on the board, illustrates the position of two teams on what is called simple attack and simple defence. The attacking side,

FOOTBALL SEASON

you will notice, is more concentrated than the defending side. The quarter back on attack, who gives the signals, has at his command a number of plays, all of which the defence must be prepared to meet in its general formation, for of course the defence does not know what play is going to be used against it. The signal giver can smash his tandem straight into the centre of the defence, or he may send a flying play around the end, or he may call for a forward pass outside of tackle, or he may send a punt into any part of the defending team's territory. As I have said, an evenly balanced defence must provide for all these possibilities.

“With this simple explanation of the general theory of football under the new rules, I must impress upon you further the idea of the bigness of the task before us, in developing ourselves into a well

THE STORY OF A

rounded football team. There are so many things to practice, that you must go at your daily work with the utmost seriousness and carefulness, and learn thoroughly as you go along. Just think what we have before us. Besides the old rudiments of the game, such as falling on the ball, interfering, starting quickly with the snap of the ball, tackling, blocking, breaking through the line, kicking, and catching, we have to learn to throw and catch a football with perfect accuracy from any position; and before the season is far along, every one of you must know all of the thousand and one possibilities under the new rules.

“In regard to learning the new rules, I am going to give a quiz on them to-morrow night, and will expect every one to know them by that time. I have only one thing further to say, and that is to advise

FOOTBALL SEASON

every man to attend his classes regularly all the time. The faculty are getting stricter, and we can't afford to lose any men on this account. I now introduce Nick O'Connor, who will say something to you."

The little trainer mounted the platform, stuck out his jaw in an aggressive way, and began to talk.

"Well, fellows, I'm glad we're all back here for another year. We must not lose a game this season. You all know what it means to beat Sussex. The best trained team will be the team that wins. I want to say right now, that this football business ain't no boys' play. It's a man's game, and you've got to get ready for it, so as to be able to take your knocks. These new rules seem to require more speed and wind than the old rules. The first thing I want you to do, therefore, is for every

THE STORY OF A

mother's son of you to get out of bed at half past six every morning, and take a run before breakfast. It will be a little hard at first, but you get to love it before long. You will be awakened every morning by a bugle call. From now on, I don't want you to eat anything but what you get in this training house. As for drinking and smoking, it's no use in my saying anything about that to a lot of Varsity players. They think too much of themselves and their college, and will cut all that nonsense out. Every man must be in bed by half past ten at night. There is one more thing I want to say, and that is if any of you fellows have a weak point about you, like a bad ankle, an old shoulder, or a tendency to weak knee, I want you to tell me right now, and we will get you something to protect that place from the very beginning of the season.

FOOTBALL SEASON

Now, don't forget this, for it's important. That's all."

Then the meeting broke up, and with serious faces the footballers all filed out.

An hour later two figures, one big, and one little, could have been discerned out on the football field. A bright moon, shining down, cast a soft glow over the great bare stands, with their tiers upon tiers of seats rising high; and the bare white goal posts at either end of the field stood spectre-like in the moonlight.

The big figure suddenly spoke: "Look here, Kid, you've got a good show for this team this year; and if you don't make good, I'll be ashamed of you."

"Don't you worry, Frank, I am going to make this team, or get busted up in trying, anyhow. I'll beat that little Rudge out, or break his neck on the Scrub. I told sister that she would see me playing

THE STORY OF A

against Sussex, and she'll do it, all right. Say, who's this coming?"

"By George! it's that big country-man."

A great, square, shambling figure came into view. It was the big fellow from up State, Si Lawson, and perhaps the same inner motive that had brought the Cross brothers out there on the field that night had affected Lawson.

"Hello, Lawson, what are you doing out here? Come out to play with the ghosts?" cried big Cross.

"Say, fellows, I kinder like this game of football," drawled the big fellow. "I used to play a little up in my town, but we did n't know much about it."

"Well, Lawson, you're big enough. Can you scrap any?"

"Oh, yes, a little bit. I wrastled Bill Smith, the blacksmith, up where I live,

FOOTBALL SEASON

and I threw him. I guess I cleaned up pretty much everything in the county. Say, do you want to wrestle now?" suddenly asked the big up-countryman, with a gleam in his eye measuring the husky centre rush.

"No, I guess not to-night," laughingly replied the latter. "You come out to-morrow, and I will try to give you some pointers about playing guard. I guess that'll be enough wrestling to hold you for a while."

"Say, he's all right," chuckled the Kid, as he nudged his big brother in the ribs.

CHAPTER III.

THE stages in the development of the Kent College football team were gradual. The first week was spent in learning to pass accurately and to handle a football. Quick starting was taught by dividing the players into squads of three, and having them get off at the snap of the ball. A squad of drop kickers was organized, and also one of place kickers, but most of the time was spent in practicing punting, and catching punts. While this latter practice was going on, the men who did not take part in the kicking and catching were sent down in relays of four, under the kicks. With the second week, the work became rougher, and there was falling on the ball, tackling the dummy, going down under kicks with tackling, blocking the ends, and

FOOTBALL SEASON

running through a few of the simple signals.

By the third week the practice each day was wound up with a short scrimmage against Assistant Coach Joe Wilding's Scrub. With real scrimmage work the squad soon began to learn something about football, and the advance became more rapid. More coaches came out to help, and they held many councils in the evenings, where they discussed tactics and plans of play.

College opened on Friday, about three weeks after the squad had come back, and that afternoon there was a big bunch of rooters on hand to see the team work out its last scrimmage before the first game of the season, which came on the next day. This practice went off fairly well. As the game the next day was an easy one, the team had not yet been taught many

THE STORY OF A

plays. They knew a couple of forward passes, the quarter back kick, and a fake kick. For the rest they had to depend on straight football and punting. Most of the squad were to be given a trying out in the first game.

Rumors of a wonderful little quarter back, to take the place of Stevie, had been going the rounds, and the great mass of undergraduate rooters were tremendously keen to view the new star in action. They had all seen and heard so much the year before of the doings of the quarter backs, who are the generals of the gridiron, that they all realized what a star quarter back meant, both for the honor of their college and the bigness of their individual purses.

In discussing signals that night at the lecture the coach said, "Each play has a number. In the odd numbers the ball goes

FOOTBALL SEASON

to the right, in the even numbers, to the left, except in the cases of fakes, when the interference goes one way, and the ball is carried another. In these cases the rule is reversed; that is, the odd numbers signal for the interference to go to the right while the ball is carried to the left, and vice versa with the even numbers. The quarter back calls out a string of numbers, and you will be given the key to tell you which one of the string is the signal. This key will be varied during the season, so that a shift from one key to another can be made in the midst of a game."

"There are two kinds of forward passes," continued the coach. "In one kind the object is to have several of your players on the spot where the forward pass is expected to fall, depending on these several players to outnumber and overcome any opponents who happen to

THE STORY OF A

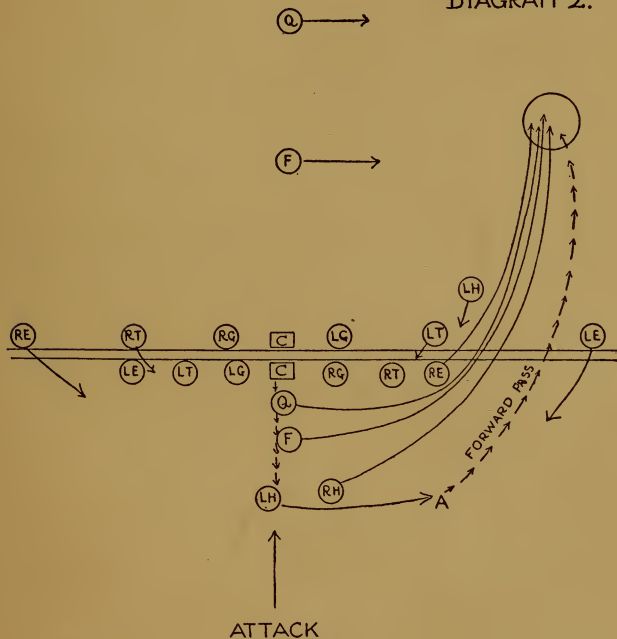
be there. The pass is made long and high, so as to give a chance for all of your men to get there in time both to block the opponents and to catch the ball. The rule in regard to a forward pass says that if any one touches the ball before it hits the ground, then it is anybody's ball. Therefore if the pass is made long and high, someone is sure to touch it before it hits the ground, and even though we do not recover the ball, yet we have a good gain anyhow.

“I am going to call this kind of a forward pass a ‘bunch’ pass, because the object is to have several players in a bunch where the ball falls. Diagram 2 illustrates a ‘bunch’ pass. The whole back field starts to the right, the ball being snapped straight back to the left half back, who, when he gets far enough out in order to throw the ball over the rush line

FOOTBALL SEASON

five yards from centre, hurls it high and far down the field. The right end, quarter

DIAGRAM 2.



A 'BUNCH' FORWARD PASS.

back, and right half back are all supposed to be down there to receive it in a bunch. Of course this pass can be worked to the

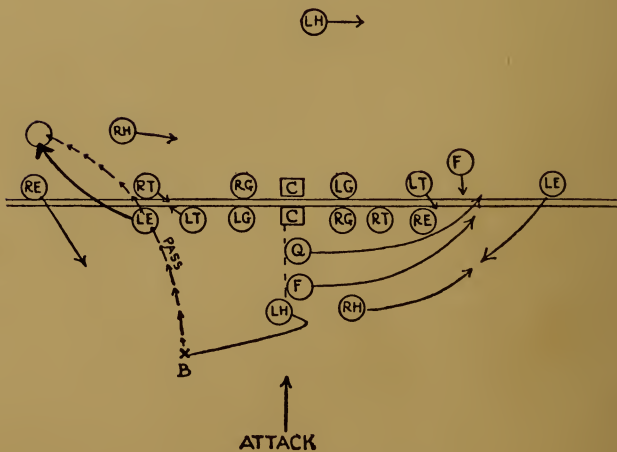
THE STORY OF A

left, too. The signals for it are 31 and 32, 31 to the right, and 32 to the left.

“The other kind of forward pass we

Q

DIAGRAM 3.



A 'SINGLE' FORWARD PASS.

will call the ‘single’ forward pass. I call it thus because there is only a single player down to receive it. The object of the play,

FOOTBALL SEASON

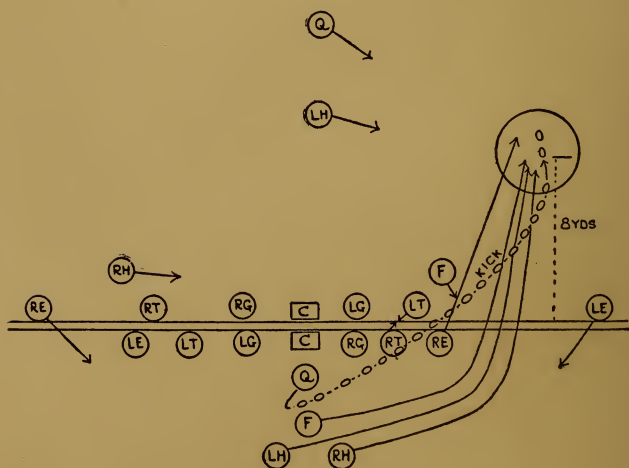
as shown in diagram 3, is to fool the other team into thinking the play is going to the right, and when they run over there to intercept it, the left end sneaks out, and the ball is thrown to him. This play can be worked either to the right or the left, and our signals for it are 21 and 22. When the fake part of the play is to the right, the signal would be 21; and when the fake part of the play is to the left, the signal would be 22. In the diagram the whole back field fakes to the right, and the right end starts down the field as though he were going to receive a forward pass; the left half makes a motion to the right, and the ball comes back directly to him from centre; he then turns to the left, and going far enough out to pass the ball legally—five yards out from centre—throws it on to the left end. Don't forget that in all these forward passes the only

THE STORY OF A

men who are eligible to receive them, are the two men on the ends of the line, and the men who are back of the line.

“Diagram 4 shows a quarter back kick.

DIAGRAM 4.



QUARTER-BACK KICK.

This play has always been a useful one, but it is more effective than ever before under the new rules. It used to be that

FOOTBALL SEASON

only the men behind the kicker, when the ball left his foot, could get the ball, and they had to catch it on the fly; but now in addition to this it's anybody's ball when it hits the ground. In this play, the three backs run out parallel to the rush line until they hear the ball meet the quarter back's foot; then they turn down the field, and being on side, have a right to catch the ball on the fly, or knock aside any opponent who may also be trying to catch the ball. The kick should be sent high enough in order to give them time to get under it. The quarter back, the instant he gets the ball from centre, steps back a pace, and hitting the ball, with his instep, about three feet from the ground, lifts it in the air about ten yards, and diagonally, to a distance of about twenty-two yards, and about eight yards into the opponent's territory. The signals for the quarter back

FOOTBALL SEASON

kick are 7 and 8, 7 to the right, and 8 to the left.”

The schedule for the season was as follows, the faculty allowing only seven games:

October 3—Howard, Cooper Field.

October 10—Vanderventer, Cooper Field.

October 17—Westlake, Cooper Field.

October 24—Harlem, New York.

October 31—Marine College, St. Johns.

November 7—Prairie University, Cooper Field.

November 14—No game.

November 21—Sussex, Sussex.

CHAPTER IV.

COOPER FIELD was a bright scene the next afternoon, when the Kent eleven, headed by the tall captain, trotted out on the gridiron for the first game of the season. Contrary to predictions of some wise-heads, that the interest in football would die out under the new rules, it had only become all the more keen. The whole college town was there, and many had driven over from the surrounding country. In the Kent players, the spectators saw a clean-cut and speedy looking bunch. The eleven of the Howard team averaged as much in weight, but had not the trim racing aspect of their opponents. The coaches had decided to start the following team:

Right end: Joe Phillips, veteran.

THE STORY OF A

Right tackle: Tomlinson, a sub of the year before, conscientious but not brilliant.

Right guard: Oswell, a tall rangy fellow, last year's sub, and effective under the new rules.

Centre: big Cross, the veteran All-America player.

Left guard: Proctor, a sub of the year before, too fat and not very aggressive.

Left tackle: Fred Deering, veteran, 190 pounds, and fast.

Left end: Randolph, a fast flying Virginian, dashing and plucky.

Quarter back: Rudge, substitute of year before. Kid Cross was to be put on in the second half.

Left half back: Captain Gibson, a tall, speedy player, and a first class punter. Played second base on the baseball team, and could handle a football, as well as a baseball, beautifully.

FOOTBALL SEASON

Full back: Harry Butler, a splendid line smasher, but not very brilliant otherwise; was so tough that he never got hurt; would go into a stone wall if ordered to by the coach.

Right half back: Jack Longcope, a promising freshman from Andover, light running and a good dodger.

After the usual preliminaries, the referee blew his whistle, and Captain Gibson drove a long place kick clear to the Howard goal. The ball was caught and rushed back, and the game was on. Howard punted; Rudge caught, and then began to batter the opposing team with straight football. Kent was able to gain steadily and surely, but was stopped after reaching the twenty yard line, where Rudge failed in a long try for goal from the field. Howard punted, and the Kent quarter back renewed his battering tactics, and

THE STORY OF A

again the ball was carried toward goal. Inside the twenty-five yard line, the Howard defence again concentrated and stiffened, and the ball was lost on downs.

The Howard kicker fell back as if to punt, but instead ran over to the right and made a long forward pass, which was cleverly captured by his end rush for a fifteen yard gain. This was first down, and the Howard quarter back on the next play made a long trick pass to the left end, who gathered in forty yards before he was laid low by Captain Gibson's flying tackle. This astonishing turn of affairs brought surprise and dismay to the rooters, and a defiant yell went up when Kent held and forced Howard to kick; Gibson caught the ball and rushed thirty yards back, and there were five minutes left to play in the first half.

Jack Mowbray had been stalking up

FOOTBALL SEASON

and down the side lines swearing softly to himself. He trotted up to Buck Owens.

“Look here, Buck,” he cried, “this is a nice way to start the season. What’s the matter?”

“It’s easy enough to see,” said the coach; “Rudge is not using his brains. He thinks he’s playing under the old rules still.”

The coach walked over to where Kid Cross lay curled up in a blanket, and touching the boy on the shoulder, said:

“You’ll get a chance in the second half. I am going to start you in. Give some variety to your plays.”

Shortly afterwards the whistle blew.

When the second half began, it was seen that there were three changes in the line-up. Kid Cross had gone into quarter, Lawson at left guard, and Bishop at left end in place of Randolph.

THE STORY OF A

Howard kicked off; the ball flew straight to the new quarter back, who stood back on the goal line. He started off like a flash, and as straight as an arrow, and before any one realized it, the little fellow had dashed through for forty yards. The ball was punted, and the Howard quarter back was downed on his ten yard line. Howard was forced to punt; Cross caught, and aided by Captain Gibson's beautiful interference, took the ball to the thirty yard line. A couple of smashes through centre, and then he fell back for try at goal from the field. The ball sailed prettily over the bar. The score was 4 to 0.

The rooters went wild with excitement, and they recognized that a new football star had arisen. With clever generalship, and the use of the few forward passes at his command, Cross managed to drive his

FOOTBALL SEASON

team over for another touch-down before time was called. It was a great victory for the little fellow who had played so brilliantly, and one which made his place secure on the eleven. That night he was the talk of the college. He wrote home and told his sister that he had made the Varsity; and his big brother warned him against the swelled head, a common disease among football stars.

CHAPTER V.

DURING the week following the Howard game, the coaches decided to perfect defence by devoting a large part of the daily practice to resisting attacks of the Scrub. Just how the end rushers should play on defence was a much mooted question among the coaches, and they held a special council one night to decide.

Some teams play their ends on defence close up to their tackles, and the instant the ball is snapped by the opposing side these ends dart across at the opposing back field, hoping to break up the play before it gets started, and also to prevent any forward passing. Other teams play their ends from five to ten yards out, and when the opponents snap the ball, they cross over a little way, but do not come in hard.

FOOTBALL SEASON

The best teams compromise by not going to either one extreme or the other. It was decided by the Kent coaches that their ends should not be bound by any hard and fast rules of playing, but should be taught to use their brains and football instinct in deciding when to shoot across hard, and when to stay out. In this way the other team would not know what they were going to do, and would be unable to lay their plans as securely.

Frank Cross raised the question of centre rush play one night when Coach Owens was lecturing the team.

“Under the old rules,” he said, “even when line bucking and short gains were more dangerous, several of the star centres used to leave their positions and back up the line, and often tackle all over the field. If they could do it under the old rules, I should now certainly be able to play a

THE STORY OF A

little back of my line of defence, and do more backing up at the ends and tackles."

"That's all right for a man who has clever football instinct," answered Coach Owens, "and, Cross, you should have had enough experience to be able to do this. A man who has football instinct can generally size up pretty well what play is coming at him. But if the centre rush is going to leave his position on defence to back up, the guards must be exceptionally strong, for they alone will have to take care of the centre of the line. If a clever quarter back on the other side finds the centre rush is backing up, he may shoot a fake right through the centre. That is, send his interference at the end, and have the runner go through centre."

The coach drew diagram 1, which had been shown before, on the blackboard.

"This is the defence," he said, "for

FOOTBALL SEASON

simple formation attack. I understand that Prairie is using shifted formations of attack, so we will take up the defence for them a little later. Gibson, who is tall and fast, is playing the position of full back on defence about fifteen yards back of his centre. He is responsible for forward passes, on-side kicks, and general defence when the play reaches him; but he is not supposed to go in to stop line bucks; because if he does, he surely would be fooled by a trick sooner or later. The quarter back plays about thirty-five yards back, looking out for kicks; he must be continually on the move, watching for quick kicks. The half backs play a little outside of tackle, and three yards back. Their first duty on defence is to stop outside tackle and end runs. In order to do this, as soon as the opposing interference starts, they must go for it. If they waited,

THE STORY OF A

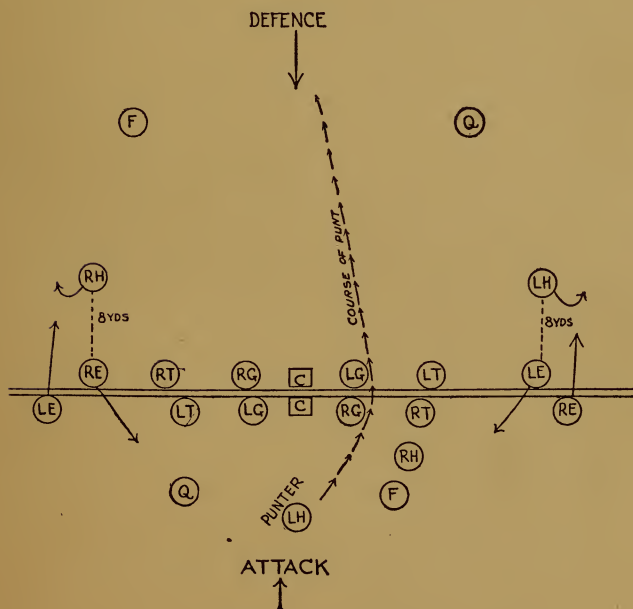
a strong attack would be very apt to go on over them for consistent gains. The tackles are taught differently at different colleges. Some coaches, in their scheme of defence, instruct their tackles always to charge forward in a certain way, hard and low, and not to allow themselves to be boxed in or pushed out too far."

In Fred Deering, Kent College had a splendid tackle; he was 190 pounds, and tall and active; he knew how to use his hands and arms on defence, and he was so strong that he did n't have to get down low and charge, as a weaker man would have to do, in order not to be pushed back. The other tackle, Tomlinson, was shorter, and had to depend on his bull-like charging to defend his side of the line. The half back, who plays behind tackle on defence, must know what his tackle is going to do, and must adjust his move-

FOOTBALL SEASON

ments accordingly. If the tackle goes in, he must go out; if the tackle goes out, he must look out for the inside.

DIAGRAM 5.



DEFENCE FOR A PUNT.

Diagram 5 shows the defence for a punt used by Kent College. The ends rush

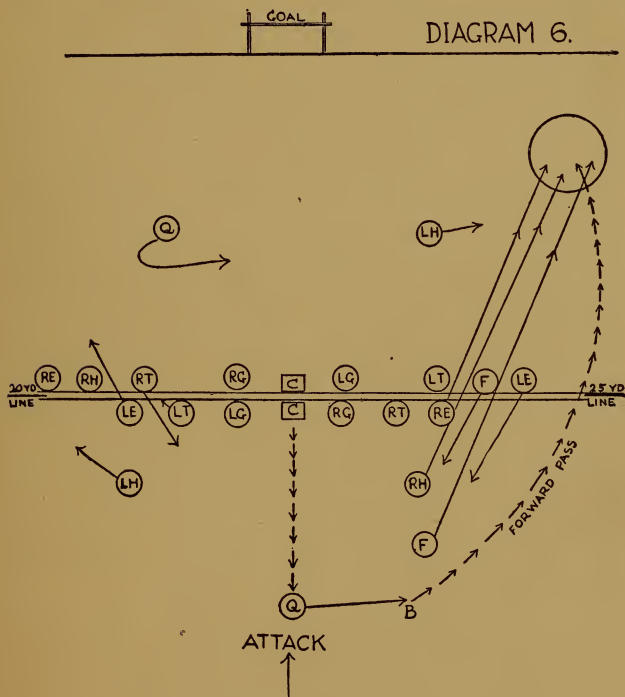
THE STORY OF A

across to hurry the kicker, also being on the look-out for trick runs. The half backs were eight yards back, watching for on-side kicks, and to block the opposing ends going down the field. The quarter back, and Captain Gibson, who played full back in this formation, were back from thirty to forty-five yards, according to the ability of the opposing kicker. The centre, guards, and tackles were instructed not to break through, but to wait for fakes of all kinds.

If the opposing team was near enough to Kent's goal to attempt a drop kick, Captain Gibson and his players were placed as in diagram 6. Gibson and Kid Cross were the only two men back of the line; the half backs and ends moved in close, in order to rush across and hurry or block the kick. The tackles were instructed not to break through, but to hold the

FOOTBALL SEASON

opposing ends, so that they could not go down for a forward pass. The two guards



'BUNCH' FORWARD PASS NEAR GOAL.

and the centre were instructed to break through and block the kick.

THE STORY OF A

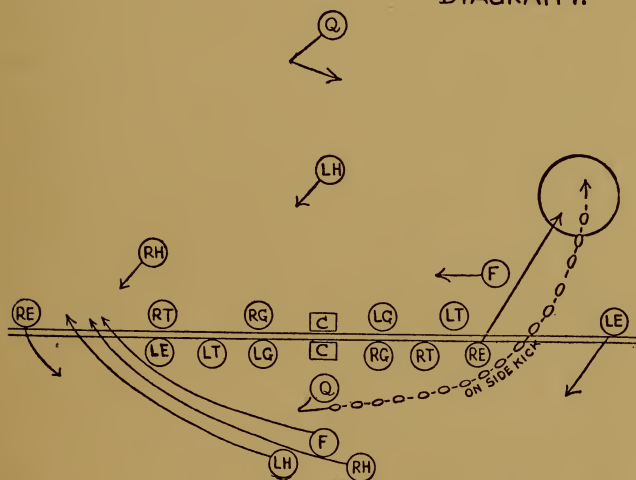
Diagram 6 also shows the forward pass play, which was very effective formerly, especially when used within drop kicking distance of goal. Under these circumstances, the defending players must try harder to block or hurry the dangerous drop kicker, than they would usually try to block or hurry a punt in midfield. The centre snaps the ball to the quarter back, who steps over to point B, and with a long whirl of his arm backwards and above his head throws the ball high in the air and far down the field, where the right end, the right half back, and full back are supposed to be to catch it. The left end and left half back fake to the left. The signal for this play was 9.

Diagram 7 shows an on-side kick—signals 25 and 26. The back field fakes to the left, the quarter back starts with them, and then makes a low quarter back kick to

FOOTBALL SEASON

the right; the right end delays for an instant, and then goes out to get the kick. It is generally better to have the quarter

DIAGRAM 7.



AN ON-SIDE KICK.

back make the on-side kick, because he is concealed behind his big forwards. He must delay as long as he can before he kicks.

On the Saturday following the Howard

THE STORY OF A

game, Kent met Vanderventer, and the play of the team was much smoother than on the Saturday before. Si Lawson got into a scrap in this game, and was put off the field. When the coach gave him a severe lecture about being so foolish as to scrap, he said:

“Well, the man was trying to twist my ankle. What was I going to do?”

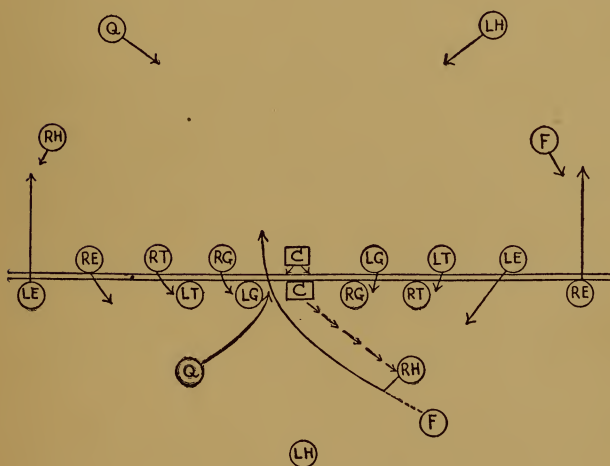
“You mustn’t scrap and get put off the team, no matter what happens; we can’t afford that. There is one thing that our football teaches, and that is to keep your temper; if you don’t learn to control yourself, you will find that the other teams will get on to the fact, and that they will be worrying and nagging you all through the season, to try to get you put off.”

Kent College won this game by a score of 28 to 0, Kid Cross getting another goal from the field.

FOOTBALL SEASON

The practice went off smoothly the next week; the snappy cold weather made it possible for the coach to drive the men a

DIAGRAM 8



FAKE KICK THROUGH LINE.

little harder; and they were beginning to round out into good shape. The morning runs, instituted by Nick O'Connor, were beginning to show good results in the wind

THE STORY OF A

of the players. Under the new rules, there is little time taken out, so that Kent was able to run the Vanderventer players right off their feet. The game was really no practice. There was so little opposition that everything went through with too much ease and smoothness.

Diagram 8 shows a fake kick, which Coach Owens gave the team the next week. The men lined up in kicking formation, but the centre, instead of snapping the ball to Gibson, flipped it over to Longcope, who turned instantly and put it against Butler's stomach, as the latter shot by him.

This play's effectiveness depended on how much the opposing line rose and separated in trying to break through, in order to block the kick.

One morning, just before bugle call, Kid Cross woke his brother, who roomed

FOOTBALL SEASON

with him in the training house, by a blood-curdling yell.

“What’s the matter, Kid?” cried the latter in startled tones, reaching over to the other cot, and giving his brother a punch.

“I just had an awful dream,” said the Kid, sitting up and rubbing his eyes in a dazed way.

“What in the ‘dickens’ are you yelling for, then?” asked Frank.

“If you had had the dream I had, you would have yelled, too,” was the reply. “I was dreaming that we were playing Sussex. The score was a tie, and we had them on the three yard line and only half a minute to play. I signalled for Harry Butler to smash through centre, depending on him to make one of those head-first dives of his over the line, even if he broke his neck.”

THE STORY OF A

“Well, what happened? Did he break it?” asked the big fellow, now smiling.

“No, he didn’t break it,” was the answer. “The don fool hurdled so high that he caught on the cross bars, and there he hung, while the referee blew his whistle. Do you blame me for yelling?”

“That’s a touchdown anyhow, you galoot. Don’t you know the rules?” snapped the big brother.

Just then the bugle sounded, and the Cross brothers went down in the dusky dawn, and joined the rest of the silent, sleepy football players. Trainer O’Connor was on hand with a piece of dry bread and a glass of milk for each man, and then they started off across country. They came back in high spirits, and with healthy appetites for breakfast. The Kid’s dream was recounted, and amidst laughter the coach solemnly warned Butler not to

FOOTBALL SEASON

hurdle so high in the future, as hurdling was against the rules anyhow.

The next Saturday Kent was to meet the Westlake University team, which always put up a stiff game, and this year had a wonderful kicker, whose prowess was known far and wide. This man played at left half back, and very often punted from his regular position, which made him all the more dangerous, as no one knew when a punt was coming. The coach had Gibson and Kid Cross, Rudge and two or three sub backs out every afternoon that week practicing kicking and catching, before the regular practice. Gibson had been coached all through the season in placing his kicks, and in over a month's practice had acquired pretty good control of direction. Kid Cross was never allowed to practice drop kicking, without someone to run at him and hurry him. In

THE STORY OF A

this way, he had acquired the steadiness that counts in a game. Lately he had fallen off in his kicking, and the coach set out to find what was the matter.

“You are not dropping the ball far enough in front of you,” he said, after the Kid had missed two or three tries. “The ball should be shot off with the point of the toe. If you drop it too close to you, you will hit it with the instep. A drop kicker’s toe should be educated so perfectly that if he happens to drop the ball badly, then the educated toe will adjust itself to the fault.”

By adopting this advice, and dropping the ball further in front of him, the Kid regained his old form. Gibson had developed into a tremendous place kicker, and was dangerous even from the centre of the field. In practice he could drive the ball over goal at that distance. He had learned

FOOTBALL SEASON

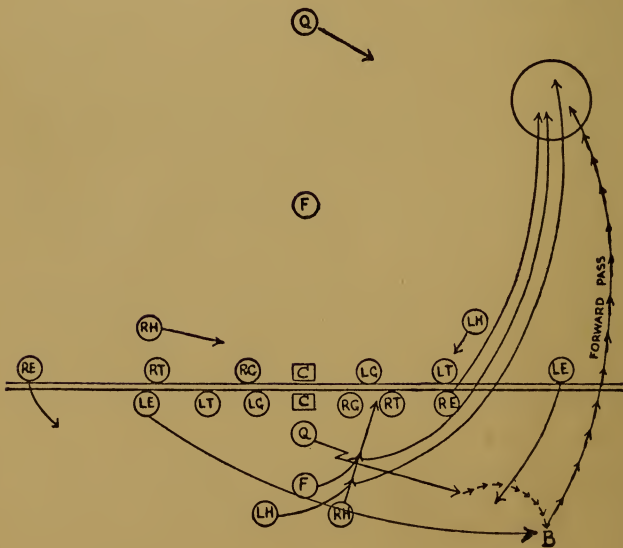
the cardinal principle of place kicking, and that is to meet the ball with the point of the toe, the foot and ankle being kept as stiff as iron. Coach Owens, Captain Gibson, and Kid Cross had spent hours together during the season, practicing little, short punts, and long and short passing, until these two players had become expert. Gibson did most of the long passing in the "bunch" plays.

Diagram 9 shows the first of the "skiddoo" group of plays. These plays all were characterized by on-side passes, and were called the "skiddoo" group, for something better, because the signal for the first play of the group was 23. Under the old rules, the on-side pass could be used, and you could have as many of them as you wanted in a scrimmage. The play in the diagram starts with a fake triple tandem buck on tackle, the intent being to

THE STORY OF A

draw in the opposing tackle and half back on that side. The quarter back makes a bluff to pass the ball to the head man in

DIAGRAM 9.



'SKIDDOO' FORWARD PASS.

the tandem, and then runs out toward the end himself. Just as the opposing end is about to tackle him, he throws on to the

FOOTBALL SEASON

left end, and goes on down the field with the right end in front of him, to interfere, or to get a forward pass. The last two men in the tandem also slide off tackle and go down the field.

CHAPTER VI.

THE Westlake team proved to be all that was expected of it. Seaver, their kicking left half, and Gibson, the Kent captain, had a great punting duel, with honors slightly in favor of the Kent man, on account of his accurate placing. Westlake could n't do much at gaining ground, and her forward passes were crude; but with two fast ends and Seaver's punting, she kept the score down to 16 to 0, two touchdowns and a place kick for goal by Gibson after a fair catch on the forty yard line.

Toward the end of the second half Cross signaled for the first "skiddoo" play, and it worked like a charm. Randolph got the ball on the on-side pass over the Westlake left end's head, and running out a little

FOOTBALL SEASON

way hurled a pass for twenty yards. It was caught by Phillips, who ran for ten yards more before he was downed. The Westlake ends had evidently been coached pretty carefully to watch for fakes, for when Kid Cross tried the 21 play, which is a "single" pass and shown in diagram 3, the Westlake right end followed Randolph out, and when Gibson made the forward pass, Randolph, who should have been there to receive it, was tussling with the Westlake end. Noting this, Coach Owens, between the halves, instructed Gibson to keep on running instead of passing the ball. The result of this, when they tried it in the last half, was that there was no one there to intercept Gibson, the opposing end having followed Randolph down the field. That night after dinner, the coach gave this new play, with the signals 25 and 26 for it.

THE STORY OF A

The Westlake game showed that Kent had a strong team, especially well versed in the kicking game. The defence against straight plays had been fair, but as Westlake had no forward passes to amount to anything, the defence for these had not been tested. Kid Cross was learning to vary his attack rather cleverly. There were three more games to play, before the final match with Sussex, and each one of them was a stiff proposition.

The practice on Cooper Field Monday after the Westlake game was very light. Several of the men were laid up with slight sprains and bruises. The coach gathered all the men around him and for half an hour there was a lively discussion of the faults which had been shown in the game on Saturday afternoon. Then keeping Gibson, Rudge, and Kid Cross out, he turned the rest of the men over to Nick

FOOTBALL SEASON

O'Connor's care, and the trainer ordered some of them off for a cross-country run, and the rest he sent in to be rubbed by the professional rubbers. With the three men whom he had kept out, Coach Owens then proceeded to go through some very peculiar actions; in fact, Dr. Bond, the Chairman of the Faculty Athletic Committee, and a party of ladies whom he had brought out to see the practice, began to laugh when they saw what was going on, and soon left, with the mystery unsolved. The coach, with a football in his hands, would run to a certain spot, put the ball down on the ground, and turn and ask a sudden question. Kid Cross would reply, and the coach would pick the ball up and run to another place and ask another question. Then there would be a little parley; then he would throw the ball away down the field, and they would all run to

THE STORY OF A

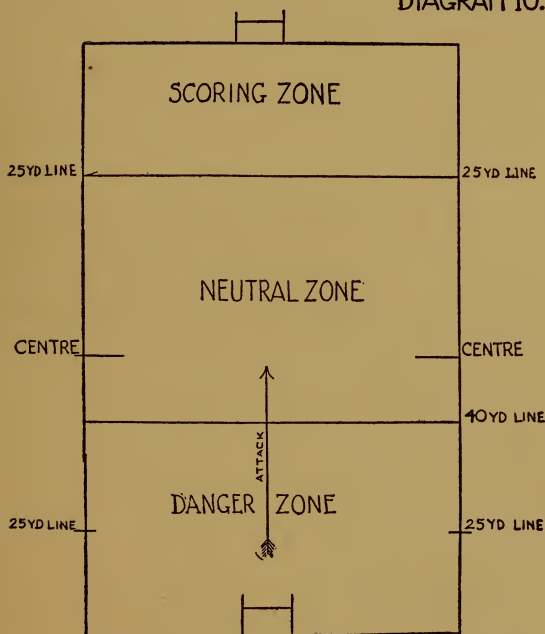
where it stopped rolling; then he would ask another question. This peculiar proceeding kept up for half an hour all up and down the gridiron, and then the group went in, actively discussing plays and plans. What the coach had been doing was practicing his quarter backs in giving the correct signal under all conditions all over the gridiron. After dinner that night in the lecture room, the coach drew diagram 10.

“There are three zones of attack on a football field,” he explained. “Inside of your forty yard line, between your forty yard line and the opponent’s twenty-five yard line, and between the opponent’s twenty-five yard line and the goal line. The first we call the danger zone; the second, the neutral zone; and the third, the scoring zone. As a general rule, it is always well to punt out of the danger zone

FOOTBALL SEASON

immediately, because a fumble or a mis-play in that territory might prove ex-

DIAGRAM 10.



ZONES OF ATTACK.

tremely costly, giving the ball to the opponent close to your goal. In the neutral zone, as a general rule, vary your

THE STORY OF A

play and take chances with tricks, forward passes, etc. In the scoring zone, try only those plays in which your side is not likely to lose the ball or lose ground; and if you have a drop kicker, keep the ball in front of the goal posts."

The game against Harlem on the 24th was to be on strange grounds, in a great city, and against an institution of 4000 students, and was regarded by the coaches with secret fear, which, however, they kept to themselves. They told the team that they were up against a stiff proposition, but could win if they played football as they knew how to play it. The week before Harlem had played the Elis a fairly close game, and the scouts, who had been sent over by Coach Owens to watch Harlem's style, had come back and reported that the New Yorkers were hard to beat. They had a stiff defence, but had not

FOOTBALL SEASON

shown much scoring ability against the Elis; also they had been a little weak in catching punts, but were exceedingly active on the defence. Two touch-downs had been made on them, as the indirect result of muffed kicks; but their opponents had not tried many tricks on them, rather relying on straight rushing, punting, and the on-side kick. Only one forward pass had been made, and that was worked fairly well. In preparation for this game the Kent College eleven was put through some hard scrimmages on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of the week preceding; on Friday the work was light, and all of the tricks were rehearsed a number of times. The coaches had decided that it was no use in holding back for the Sussex game, and Kid Cross was instructed to show his full hand and try everything. Coach Owens had a last card

FOOTBALL SEASON

up his sleeve to be learned in the two weeks of secret practice before the final great game. He had told the other coaches of his new idea, and they had all been much impressed. If Sussex could be surprised by a new play, she might be caught off her guard and beaten.

CHAPTER VII.

ON Friday night after dinner the coaches went into council behind closed doors. At this meeting were Buck Owens, head coach; Nick O'Connor, the trainer; Jim Mowbray, line coach; Frank Hankey, a famous old end; Joe Wilding, Scrub coach; Jack Mitchell, who had been over to see Harlem play the Elis; and Walter Campbell, the experienced advisory coach who represented Kent on the Rules Committee. It is easy to see by the strength of this council that the Kent football tacticians were getting down to serious work for the last half of the football season. Coach Owens opened the meeting by calling on Mitchell to repeat his report on the Harlem-Eli game.

“They have got a stiff team at Har-

THE STORY OF A

lem," said Mitchell, "and they keep playing to the finish; but we can beat them if our men are careful about being penalized for making fouls, and if we play a wide open game against them. They have a strong line defence, and it would be impossible for us to score, I think, by straight football alone. As I told Buck, they are a little weak on catching kicks."

"What sort of an attack have they?" asked Campbell.

"Their attack against the Elis was more old-fashioned than anything I have seen yet, and I have seen all of the big teams playing this season. Their forward passes are crude. Their quarter back picks out what he thinks the weak place in the opposing line, and hammers that all through the game. He hammered the Elis' left tackle last week until the coaches had to send out a fresh man. They play

FOOTBALL SEASON

the old-fashioned brute strength game, without the best modern ideas of open play.”

“We are not much afraid of that kind of a game,” said Coach Owens. “The days of brute strength have passed. I believe young Cross has learned to vary his play effectively. He and I went all over the field again this afternoon, practicing what signals to give under varying conditions, and his ideas are first class.”

“Have you got any system of showing the man who is going to make a forward pass just where to throw the ball?” asked Campbell. “The Indians used colored caps to indicate the man to whom the ball should be thrown.”

“Yes,” said Buck Owens, “we have been teaching our men to hold up their hands, to show the thrower where they are. As soon as the pass is made, one of the

THE STORY OF A

men, who is appointed to receive it, yells out, if he can get it, and the others instantly begin to interfere. The trouble with our game so far," continued the coach, "is that we have spent so much time on the forward pass, on-side kick, and punting game that we have not yet developed a powerful simple attack. The stronger the simple attack is, the more effective will be the forward pass game. Of course we have Harry Butler, who can smash the centre of the line, but our straight half back bucks for quick openings, and our half back plays outside of tackle have not yet been perfected. Next week I am going to put the men through individual interference practice. They do not know how to knock out a tackler, and also have a bad tendency now to use their hands and arms which may prove very costly to us. The officials are very strict



AN ON-SIDE KICK, SHOWING THE COURSE OF THE BALL AND THE LEFT END GOING DOWN TO GET THE BALL AFTER IT HITS THE GROUND

FOOTBALL SEASON

in calling this foul play down, and the penalty is heavy."

This conversation on football was the beginning of a two hours' discussion. The new code of rules had set the football tacticians to thinking hard, and many a coaches' council that season lasted into the wee small hours.

The next morning the Kent football squad took the 8 o'clock train for New York. Through the courtesy of a prominent railroad official, who was an alumnus of Kent, the squad always traveled in luxurious private cars. The trainer and coaches deemed it wiser that the team take the two hours' run to New York the morning of the game, rather than go over the night before and sleep in strange beds.

The game was called at 2 o'clock, and twenty thousand spectators were on hand to watch the contest. The teams trotted

THE STORY OF A

out from opposite ends of the field almost at the same moment. After ten minutes of preliminary practice, the referee tossed the coin. Kent won, and Captain Gibson chose the north goal, with a slight wind at his back.

Harlem kicked off. The kicker teed the ball up in the centre of the field, and sent it whirling high in the air, in order to give his men plenty of time to get down under it. Captain Gibson caught, but had not gained five yards before a flying tackle threw him hard. Gibson punted for fifty yards well beyond centre of the field, and Randolph, the fast left end, nailed the Harlem back the instant the ball landed in his arms, almost causing a muff. If Gibson had sent the kick a little more to the left and lower, the probability is that Randolph might have secured it on the bound. Harlem lined up quickly, and instantly

FOOTBALL SEASON

shot a play at Tomlinson, Kent's right tackle. Phillips, the veteran right end, saw what was coming, and dove under the interference like a flash, piling it up. The runner, not being able to get over the pile, curved backwards, and went out towards end; Gibson, however, had come up from his position fifteen yards back of the line, and nailed him for no gain. The next play was an attempt to clear Phillips. The quarter evidently had figured that if the end came in so fast, a wide play might circle him. But Phillips was foxy and laid out, stopping the play without much difficulty. Harlem was forced to kick, it being third down. The ball did not go very far; Butler and Longcope blocked the Harlem ends cleverly, and Gibson got the ball on the bound, and with Kid Cross flying along in front of him, he came back eight yards.

THE STORY OF A

The ball was landed on Kent's forty yard line, near the left side line. Cross signalled for a fake. The interference went to the right, but the runner shot straight down the side line, and was pushed out after a three yard gain. The ball was taken in fifteen yards from the side line by the referee, and Cross, who had noted that Harlem's left end had been coming in pretty fast, signalled for the "skiddoo" play, shown in diagram 9. With Longcope in the lead, Butler on his back, and Gibson on Butler's back, the tandem went smashing into the line on right tackle; Cross made a feint to give the ball to Longcope, and started out around the end. He had not gone three yards before he came in contact with Harlem's left end, who had shot in hard. He simply passed the ball on and back to Randolph, the Kent left end, who had fol-

FOOTBALL SEASON

lowed him. In the meantime Phillips, Kent's right end, Gibson, and Harry Butler had succeeded in getting well down the field in a bunch. The instant they saw that Randolph was clear with the ball, they held up their hands to signal, and making a long high forward pass, Randolph hurled the ball at them. Gibson yelled, "I have it," and the other two men started to interfere. The two of them succeeded in blocking off the Harlem full back, and Gibson, having caught the ball, went on for five yards, where he was nailed by Harlem's quarter back.

The play had been brilliantly executed, and the Kent rooters were wild with delight. Kid Cross followed this advantage with a couple of quick-opening smashes at the line, which netted six yards. It was third down, and four to gain, with the ball on Harlem's thirty-five yard line, near the

THE STORY OF A

middle of the field. It was a little too far off to try field goal, so the Kid called for the play shown in diagram 8. The Kent eleven lined up as if for a try at goal, but the centre flipped the ball over to Longcope, who passed to Butler as the latter went by him; Gibson was on Butler's back as he went through left guard, and the pair crashed along for five yards and first down. The ball was on the thirty yard line still in the centre of the field. Cross could not afford to give a signal which would lose the ball or lose ground, and moreover he was determined to keep in front of goal, so that as a last resort he would be in position to try a drop kick.

Cross and Coach Owens had gone over this situation many a time together, and the Kid knew what to do. There was no hesitation in his voice as he called for two smashes at the centre of the line in quick

FOOTBALL SEASON

succession. They netted four yards; the ball was on the twenty-six yard line. The Kid placed his men as if for another try at goal by a drop kick. The Harlem players, with the exception of the quarter back, all came up on the line of scrimmage, in order to rush through and block the kick. The signal number was 9, which is the play shown in diagram 6; the ball was snapped to Cross, who ran to point B, a little to the right, and threw the ball about eighteen yards down the field. There were two men there to get it, Longcope and Joe Phillips, the end. Longcope yelled, "I have it;" Phillips smashed into the opposing quarter back; and as the ball settled in Longcope's arms the Harlem full back nailed him, but it was a fifteen yard gain, and the ball was almost on Harlem's goal line. A couple of heavy smashes by straight ahead half back bucks on tackle

THE STORY OF A

carried the ball to the two yard line; and then, when the whole Harlem team was concentrated, expecting another smash at the line, the Kid signalled for the "skid-doo" play, shown in diagram 9. The tandem went smashing in, and when half the Harlem team piled up in front of it, the Kid, after feinting to pass the ball, sailed out around the right end, and kept on over goal line, not finding it necessary to pass to Randolph, who trotted along beside him. The punt out was worked neatly, and the Kid's cunning toe sent the ball over the bar for the extra point.

Twelve minutes of the first half had been played, and it was 6 to 0 in favor of Kent. The fray waged back and forth until Kent was again within striking distance of Harlem goal by reason of a muff of one of Gibson's long high punts. Phillips had fallen on the ball like a swift bird of

FOOTBALL SEASON

prey. On the next play, however, Tomlinson, right tackle, was caught using his hands, and the umpire put Kent back fifteen yards, thus losing them the opportunity to score. Shortly afterwards the whistle blew at the end of the first half.

Cross was instructed between the halves to play entirely a kicking game, until he got within striking distance of goal. Coach Owens figured that they could score at least once by kicking tactics; and then, as the effect would be to give the ball to Harlem a great deal, his team would get much needed practice on defence.

The outcome of the second half proved that the coach was right in his judgment. Continued punting, well placed, began to worry the Harlem backs. Harlem seemed unable to block Randolph and Phillips, the Kent ends, and they were down the field under the kicks in beautiful form.

THE STORY OF A

Finally Randolph secured a punt on Harlem's twenty-five yard line; the Kid quickly sent a couple of smashes into centre, and then fell back for a drop kick. The Harlem team began yelling, "Look out for a fake," and were so taken up getting ready to stop the expected fake that when the ball was quickly passed back to the Kid, he had plenty of time, and very deliberately took advantage of it, easily dropping the ball over the bar. It was a neatly executed play, and brought the score up to 10 to 0. Harlem, the last few minutes of the game, changed their rushing tactics, and began to try tricks of all kinds, hoping to score. Once or twice their daring seemed to be successful. An old-fashioned double pass was attempted, and it looked for an instant as if the Kent players had been fooled. Phillips at end was drawn in badly, but big Lawson broke

FOOTBALL SEASON

through the line and overpowered the runner before he could get under way. The time-keeper shortly afterwards came running out on the field, and the referee blew his whistle, and the game was over, and Kent had yet to lose a game.

A big crowd of rooters from Kent stayed over in New York, and, as college boys will, they tried to let every one in New York know that they had won a victory. At the theatre that night, when the chorus of a frisky show appeared in the college colors, the joy of the rooters knew no bounds. The celebration was not so much for the glory of beating Harlem, for they all expected to beat that eleven anyhow, but it was a good chance to celebrate, and they took advantage of it.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON a bench on the Harlem side of the field that afternoon there had been noticed a little group of three men. They did not seem to be saying much during the progress of the play, but sat with intent, eager faces, studying every move of the Kent team. They were three of the Sussex coaches, Lewin, Winters, and Doughty, famous ex-players.

When they walked off of Harlem Field that afternoon they smilingly thanked their hosts, the Harlem coaches, for the side line privileges which had been granted them readily; but down in their hearts they were more serious than their faces would seem to indicate. They realized that Kent had a fast football machine, with great possibilities. The three Sussex scouts did

FOOTBALL SEASON

not waste much time in New York, like the joyful rooters of Kent, but were soon seated in a snug compartment of a fast express, speeding away northward to Sussex. There was no thought in their minds but to get back as soon as possible, and prepare for the great battle to come. Lewin, on a piece of paper, was showing his two comrades the Kent defence, which had been his part in the division of the labor at the game that afternoon. Doughty had the offence; and Winters, the line. They were eagerly comparing notes, and preparing for the thousand and one questions which they knew would be asked them when they got back to Sussex.

“I can’t make much out of the way their ends play,” said Lewin. “They don’t seem to have any particular way of playing at all; sometimes they shoot in, and sometimes they don’t.”

THE STORY OF A

“What about the half backs on defence?” asked Doughty.

“Well, Butler, the full back, who is the left half on defence, seems to back up very quickly; he does not wait as long as Longcope, who backs up the right tackle. Longcope plays a more crafty game, and holds back a little, till he is pretty sure what kind of play is coming at him. Butler, however, is a regular smasher, and when he goes into the interference, he rips in hard.”

“Well,” said Doughty, “then we will try forward passes on Butler’s side of Kent’s line, and we’ll try straight runs at the other side. Longcope backs up Tomlinson, the weaker of the two tackles. If we put some fast plays at them we will gain some ground. Kent seems to be pretty good at a kicking game. Do you fellows realize that that little quarter back,

FOOTBALL SEASON

Cross, is a wonder? He played an errorless game to-day."

"I should say I did realize it," said Winters. "He is going to be the most dangerous factor in our game with Kent."

"Suppose that boy gets hurt," said Lewin; "have they got anybody to take his place?"

"Nobody but Rudge, last year's sub," said Doughty, and the three Sussex scouts exchanged meaning looks.

"Well, such things have been known to happen," said Lewin grimly.

The work was light on Cooper Field the following Monday and Tuesday. The coaches of Kent were getting worried about the regular mid-season slump. It seems impossible for any football team, no matter how well trained, to go through the season without a bad slump; it generally arrives about the middle of the season.

THE STORY OF A

The men are becoming a little sore and weary of the ceaseless strain on their nerves and strength that college football entails. It is at this time that molehills become mountains, and the little troubles assume giant proportions. The ambition and loyal spirit that keeps a squad together, self-sacrificing comrades working for a common end, appears to wane a little bit in slump time. A clever trainer can detect the signs of over-training, which is the real cause of the slump, by the way his men sleep and eat, by irritability, and other little signs. Nick O'Conner on Monday afternoon called Coach Owens aside, before the practice, and said:

“Look here, Buck, some of these boys are going just a bit stale. I guess we will have to let up on them a little this week. There's Captain Gibson, for instance; he's been so worried about getting things to

FOOTBALL SEASON

run straight that he tosses about all night long. It is nothing very bad that I'm telling you; you needn't get worried. Under the new rules the game isn't so grinding as it used to be, so I'm not so much afraid of a bad slump."

"Great Scott, man!" said Coach Owens, "we've got a fearful lot to learn, and we need the practice badly."

"I know that," responded Nick, "but you know yourself that one good practice will do these boys more good than a dozen bad practices. You've got to have them feeling right for the right kind of practice."

"Well, I guess you're right, Nick," said Coach Owens resignedly.

In the coaches' council that night reports were heard from the scouts sent out to watch the Sussex-Middletown game of the Saturday before, and also the reports

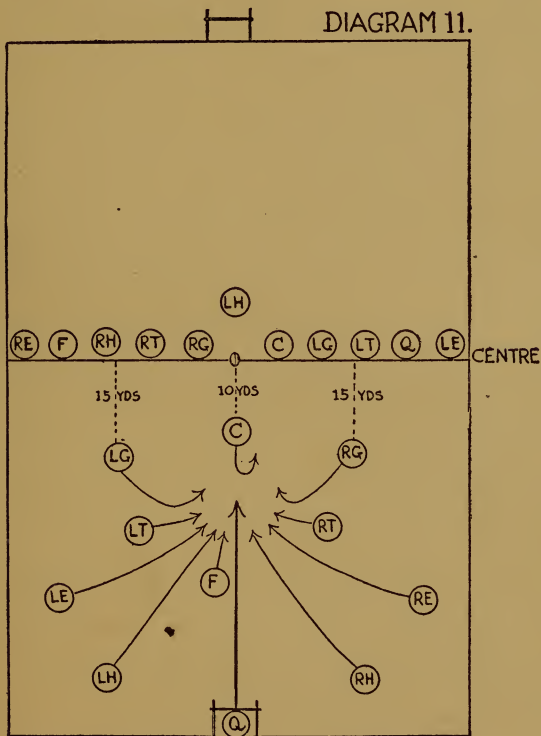
THE STORY OF A

of those sent down to watch the Marines play. It was agreed that if Kent could only tide over the Marine game on the following Saturday, she would be ready to take the home stretch for Prairie and Sussex in great shape. Marine College always had a "cracker-jack" team. The players were kept in the finest condition, and were a swift, hardy bunch, who took to the new rules like ducks to water. After Marine came Prairie University, and that game would be the East against the West.

During the whole of the week following the Harlem game almost no scrimmage work was used in the practice. The morning runs still continued regularly, and kept the men in fit condition. It was decided by the coaches to drill the Varsity more thoroughly in the plays now at their command. The substitutes and the Scrub of course regularly went through the daily

FOOTBALL SEASON

scrimmage, but the first eleven were polished off in signal practice and the per-



THE KICK-OFF.

fection of the all-important kicking game. At a lecture one night the coach drew dia-

THE STORY OF A

gram 11 on the blackboard, to illustrate the kick-off, or the opening play of the game.

“You will notice,” he said, “how the kicking side is arranged in a long drawn out line across field; and the side receiving the kick is placed in a scattered fashion to cover their whole territory in the best manner. As a general principle the fast runners are placed well back, and the heavier men forward. There is only one successful way to run back the kick-off, and that is for the player towards whom the kick is sent to catch the ball on the run, and then dart, as straight as a bird flies, down the field at top speed. The rest of the men should gather in front of him at full speed also, their movements being timed so that they will not slow the runner up, but rather so that they shall be under way when he dashes in amongst them from

FOOTBALL SEASON

behind. Certain celebrated players have made phenomenal runs in this way. The object of all this speed is to get down the field before the wide flung line of the kicking side has time to converge and concentrate on the runner. The greater the speed, the thinner will be the line of tacklers. It takes long practice for the man who catches the ball to learn to run at tip-top speed down the field straight as an arrow, until he gathers full momentum, and then to swerve only the slightest bit in his course to dodge an oncoming tackler; and to increase his speed, rather than decrease it by slowing up to dodge. It is a reckless piece of business to dash this way into a scattered field, and I have seen some men get nasty falls; but it is the only way to succeed."

CHAPTER IX.

ON Friday morning the Kent squad, including players, substitutes, coaches, trainer, rubbers-down, manager, and assistant manager, took the train for St. Johns, where Marine College was situated. This was too long a trip to be attempted on the morning of the game. On the trip down Coach Owens sat with Kid Cross and Captain Gibson with a written report of the scouts who had been to see Marine play in front of him, and reviewed the style of play to be used. The Marine eleven was a shifty team, and had been thoroughly coached in the new style of game. Unlike Harlem, their defence was planned particularly to stop a very open attack, including the forward pass and on-side kick; their ends played wide,

FOOTBALL SEASON

and the half backs five yards back of their respective tackles; it looked as if they were laying for forward passes especially. Coach Owens carefully went over all of this to Kid Cross, and then asked him what was his opinion as to the best attack to be used against Marine.

"How do their tackles play on defence?" asked Cross.

"They have a very fast and shifty pair of tackles," said Coach Owens. "Perhaps that's why their ends and half backs play so far away. They trust the tackles to stop straight plays."

"Do their tackles play in or out?"

"The left tackle plays pretty well out, and the right tackle plays a little further in," was the reply.

"Well," said Kid Cross, "the best plan, I think, will be to send straight ahead half back bucks at those tackles, until we bring

THE STORY OF A

them in, and then shoot fast interference plays just outside of them. I would play a smashing, bucking game almost entirely until we force those half backs and ends to play in a little closer. When they did this, then we would be able to work a forward pass or two; but as long as they are out where they are we would be playing right into their hands to try a forward pass."

"Well, that's our policy, then," said Coach Owens. "We'll smash them at first on straight plays combined with a good deal of kicking. I don't want to use our men up too much, because the halves will be twenty-five minutes each. It looks to me as if it was going to be a windy day tomorrow, and maybe rain. In case of wind you two men must use your brains and judgment 'to beat the band' in handling those punts. If the other side is kicking against the wind, it is very difficult of

FOOTBALL SEASON

course to handle their punts, because they drop so close to scrimmage; and you must play so that you can always get under them on the fly. Gibson, if I were you, in such a case I would send the two half backs up into the line to block the opposing ends, rather than play them back, as we do on a quiet day, or with the wind against us."

"By the way, Nick," continued Coach Owens, calling across the car to the little trainer, "it looks as if it might be slippery and muddy to-morrow down there; how about cleats?"

"Oh, I'm prepared for that; you don't catch me napping," replied Nick. "Every man has an extra pair of shoes with mud cleats on them. Those mud cleats, you know, are one big cleat across the middle of the shoe, nearly an inch thick."

"Captain Gibson," said Coach Owens,

THE STORY OF A

“I have a welcome announcement to make to you. I expect Hefflefoot to join us to-night at St. Johns. He arrives from the West to-day. In his time ‘Heff’ was a tremendous gridiron fighter, and for a week I have been imploring him to come on and help us out of our little slump. We need a little new blood in the coaching, and the mere fact of having ‘Heff’ around, even if he doesn’t do any coaching, will help the men.”

The private car was switched to another train at Biltmore, and a little puffing engine took the Kent football army on down to St. Johns. This quaint little town, the home of the great Government School, was ideally situated on a beautiful harbor. Uncle Sam had just been building magnificent new buildings, and no sooner had the Kent squad arrived at Carwell Hall, the quiet old Colonial inn at

FOOTBALL SEASON

which they were to be quartered, than they were all anxious to go out and look around. It was 4 o'clock in the afternoon, but the coaches decided to cut out the short practice which they had at first intended taking, in order to limber the men up; and instead sent them all sight-seeing through the great Government institution.

When Si Lawson, who was walking along with the Cross brothers, saw a double line of a hundred or so cadets stiffly marching along and noted the small size of the youngsters, he sneeringly remarked:

"Say, fellows, is that the best they've got down here? Why, it's a shame to play against those kids; I could eat a couple like that for my breakfast every morning."

"Well, Si," laughingly remarked big Cross, "you had better get all that out of your mind; those boys are only first year men. Remember there are about 1500 stu-

THE STORY OF A

dents down here. Moulton, who plays against you to-morrow, is a whale; they say he is as fierce as a tiger, and is going to claw you up before the game is half over."

"That's what I want," said the big fellow. "I'm feeling so good now that I hate to bother with any other kind than that."

Kid Cross laughed, and turning to Lawson, said: "Look here, now, you big brute, don't you start to scrapping to-morrow, and get put out of the game. They have fired you once already this season; if you get it again, the faculty will shut you out of that Sussex game. I guess you want to play against them, don't you?"

"Well, rather," said Lawson. "I'm getting to feel like everybody else does around Kent. Beating Sussex is about all we really care for, anyhow."

FOOTBALL SEASON

The next afternoon Marine Field, overlooking the waters of the harbor, which were glancing and sparkling in the bright sunshine, was a gay and unusual scene. A strong wind blowing down the field fluttered the gay ribbons of the fair spectators, and brought anxious thoughts to the coaches. A crowd of several thousand was present. One side of the field, a solid mass of blue, indicated the battalion of cadets there to yell their team to victory. Their famous siren cheer had often quailed the hearts of their adversaries. Another stand was filled with spectators; and across the gridiron were more thousands viewing the spectacle standing and from chairs and benches. Here the officers and their families were given the best seats, and right in front of them on long benches sat the subs of the Kent team.

THE STORY OF A

The teams had taken their preliminary work, and when the referee tossed the coin for choice of goal, the players tossed over their sweaters to the subs. It was a foregone conclusion that the winner would take the wind, as it is always well to secure the advantage at the start of the game; and again, the wind might die down toward the end, as it has been known to do in great matches of the past.

Marine won the toss, and as the cadet team scattered over the territory in front of the north goal, shouts of exultation went up from the mass of blue in the stand. Captain Gibson had elected to kick off, because he was afraid that the Marine kicker would drive the kick-off across the goal line, thus forcing Kent to punt out from the twenty-five yard line, which is a distinct disadvantage.

Kent lined up across the centre of the

FOOTBALL SEASON

field, and Gibson teed up the ball. The wind blew it down once or twice, to the amusement of the spectators, but finally it was sent away with a powerful drive directly into the teeth of the gale; it rose steadily, seemed to hover a second in the air, and finally dropped straight down into the arms of the Marine full back. Lawson, Deering, and Kid Cross were all there at the same instant. It was a terrific tackle, but only a forerunner of the fierceness with which the whole game was to be played.

Buck Owens, knowing the slight slump that his men were in, had been afraid of this game, when, under ordinary circumstances, with his team in the finest condition, he would have had no fear. Hefflefoot, the giant guard and renowned fighter of old, had arrived late the night before; and when the players were called together

THE STORY OF A

for their final instructions, before going on the field, Coach Owens had introduced the newcomer, and he had made a speech to the men. His earnest words had brought out a little of the enthusiasm that had somehow been lacking, and when Owens sent his eleven out on the field, it was with more confidence as to the outcome.

Marine immediately punted after catching the kick-off; Kid Cross was away down the field, ready for such a play, and Gibson came racing back to help him. The punt was beautifully placed, well to the left, and traveled with such speed in the wind that Cross could not get under it, and the ball rolled on to the fifteen yard line. Taking a quick glance at the oncoming end rushers, and noting that they were at a fairly safe distance, Cross went for the ball, carefully picked it up, and

FOOTBALL SEASON

just as the end was making a fierce dive at him, hoping to nab him unawares, he side-stepped, and raced down the field. The oncoming tacklers were too thick, however, and he only succeeded in cutting ten yards off of a seventy yard gain. This mighty kick threw Kent on her defence almost under the shadow of her goal, and the Marine followers gave their weird siren yell. It would do little good to punt here in the teeth of the gale, because a fair catch might be made in front of goal; so the only thing left to do was to buck it down the field.

The Kent team set to with a dogged determination. If they could only use up the twenty-five minutes of the first half, without being scored upon, they were almost certain to win. Time and time again Longcope and Gibson plunged straight ahead into the line at the head of

THE STORY OF A

triple tandems. Kid Cross was marvelously quick in getting the ball to the runner on these quick-opening plays, and for thirty yards the Kent team smashed along until the ball was out of danger. It was first down on Kent's forty yard line. Butler went into the line on a cross buck to the right, gathering in two yards; Longcope twisted straight through right tackle for six yards; and a Marine man went down hurt. It looked as if Kent was going to smash her way to goal; but when the injured player was fixed up, and the play was renewed in the two minutes prescribed by the rules; Kid Cross noted a change in the defence. The Marine half backs were closer, playing just back of tackle, and the ends had moved in. It was what the Kid wanted. The open defence of the cadets was beginning to concentrate. It was third down, two yards to gain, and the ball

FOOTBALL SEASON

just about the centre of the field. The Kid signalled for the first "skiddoo" play; the tandem went straight ahead at tackle; the Kid made a bluff to give it to Longcope, and then dashed off for right end with Randolph, the Kent left end, at his back. The Marine left end tackled Kid Cross, but just before he could close in the ball was passed on to Randolph, who kept on down the field for a ten yard gain. Shortly after this Kent was put back fifteen yards for holding. On the third down, Cross signalled for a fake kick and forward pass, but the play failed, and the ball went to Marine.

Marine, true to her best policy, punted instantly. This time her kicker sent the ball whirling very high into the air; the wind caught it up there, and carried it for a full fifty yards; Kid Cross and Gibson were back; Cross yelled "I have it," and

THE STORY OF A

allowing for the wind, judged the ball correctly. Standing close in front of him was Gibson, ready for a muff, and playing it safe. Again Kent started to smash down the field, but the pace had begun to tell, and Marine was concentrating her defence. Afraid to try forward passes in his own territory, Cross signalled for a punt. Gibson drove it low and hard against the wind, but it was captured on the bound by the Marine quarter back. Again Marine kicked, and again the punter boosted the ball high into the air; this time the ball dropped on the ten yard line in Gibson's arms; he cut off ten yards by a brilliant dash, and it was Kent's ball on her twenty yard line.

The time-keeper sent out word there were ten minutes left to play. After trying a couple of bucks, Kid Cross signalled for a kick. Gibson shot the ball well off to

FOOTBALL SEASON

the left and low, being afraid of a fair catch in front of goal, when it would be an easy matter for Marine to have scored on the place kick.

It was Marine's ball on Kent's forty yard line. For the first time in the game, the Marine quarter back began to rush the ball. A sharp dash at Tomlinson caught that player napping, for four yards; another quick play outside of Tomlinson resulted in the necessary six yards for this down. Another one at the same spot was nailed by Longcope for a yard gain. On the next play the Marine right tackle shifted over to the left side of the line, and it was plain to be seen that Tomlinson, Kent's right tackle, was to be the target of attack. They were going to attempt to use him up, and make their gains through his place in the line. Tomlinson did not shift quickly enough, and was boxed easily

THE STORY OF A

for another good gain. It was third down, two yards to go. The same shift was attempted, but instead of the play on Tomlinson, a long pass was made to the right end. Gibson stopped the runner after he had gone five yards. It was the fiercest attack that Kent had been up against during the season, and the ball was nearing the goal. Time had been called for an injury, and Gibson went up to Longcope and Kid Cross.

“Look here, boys, something has got to be done to stop this business. You go in quicker, Longcope, to back up Tomlinson; I’ll move over to that side more, instead of playing right back of centre. Kid, we are not much afraid they are going to kick this close to goal, so you come up more to the left side, or almost to the position I usually play. Don’t move into these positions until the instant before the ball is

FOOTBALL SEASON

snapped, so as not to put them on to what we are doing.”

Joe Phillips, the right end, veteran that he was, had already decided to smash in under the plays aimed at Tomlinson, and told Longcope that he was going to do this. The next Marine play was a quick dash at Kent's left tackle; Deering, defending that side of the line, was a stone wall. The same shift as before against Tomlinson was attempted, but Longcope and Phillips went in so sharply that they smashed the interference as it hit the line; and this, with Gibson hovering behind the pile, gave small chance for the Marine half back to gain. He was quickly smothered for a small loss. The ball was near the centre of the field, and on the twenty yard line, so the only thing left Marine to do was either to try a drop kick, or a fake drop kick with a forward pass, or some

THE STORY OF A

other trick. The Kent scouts had reported that Marine's drop kickers did not amount to much; so when Marine formed as if for a try at goal, every Kent player felt down in his heart that a trick was coming. The two teams were now lined up on Kent's twenty yard line, directly in front of goal, as in diagram 6; Gibson was ten yards back; Butler, left half on defence, came up on the line outside of left tackle; Randolph, the end, stood right beside him; Deering, left tackle, was fully prepared to block the Marine's right end from going down the field, and made no attempt whatsoever to break through to block the kick. When the ball was snapped, the Marine right end tried to break away from the left tackle, who simply held him; the right half back and full back tried to dash out and go down the field, but both were blocked by Phillips and Butler. The

FOOTBALL SEASON

Marine quarter made a long, high pass, which landed securely in Kid Cross's arms, and he brought the ball back to the line of scrimmage before he was downed. The danger point had been passed; there were less than five minutes to play, and the Kid held onto the ball like grim death and used up time until the whistle blew.

CHAPTER X.

ELEVEN subs rushed on the field with blankets, which they threw over the shoulders of the players, and then the whole squad hustled into one of the old boat-houses, where the teams that play Marine are always taken between the halves. A moment later, when Coach Owens came into the big room, where the players were lying around and resting, there was a cheerful atmosphere about, and when he started to talk, a smile was on his face.

“Well, boys, we’ve got ’em. With the wind at our backs this half we will play the kicking game, and I will guarantee that when we get down within striking distance we won’t fail to score. These Marines will fight to the finish, and you will find them

FOOTBALL SEASON

coming at you harder than ever during this half, so for the sake of old Kent, don't let up. As soon as we score, remember that we change sides, and have to fight against the wind again."

Then the coach walked over where Tomlinson lay. This player had borne the brunt of the fierce Marine attack, and he was pretty well done up. Nick O'Connor was working over him as he would over a prize-fighter.

"Tomlinson, you did great work, boy; show them what 's in you, and fight harder than ever this half," said the coach.

"We'll stop them all right," said Jack Longcope, who was sitting by Tomlinson; "we're on to their tricks now, and I'll guarantee they won't gain ground through our side during this half."

"One minute left," cried the referee, sticking his head in the door.

THE STORY OF A

“All right, boys,” cried the coach; “let’s get out there on the field first.”

A couple of minutes afterwards the whistle blew, and the Marine kicker sent the ball whirling into Kent’s territory. It was accurately caught, and the fray started again. A couple of exchanges of kicks soon had the ball in Kent’s possession on Marine’s thirty-five yard line. The orders had been to score by a touch-down, and not a drop kick, because if Kent scored by drop kick, the teams would immediately change sides, with the advantage of the wind again in Marine’s favor, and her eleven might top the score of four points, made by a drop or place kick, by themselves pushing a touch-down over. Slowly, but surely, the Kid crushed his heavy tandem attack down the field, until the twenty yard line was reached. The defence was here concentrated; Butler went

FOOTBALL SEASON

into centre for two yards on a cross buck; Gibson skirted right tackle for six yards; and quick as a flash the Kent team lined up, and Gibson shot straight ahead for first down. The ball was on the nine yard line, and two more desperate plunges landed it on the three yard mark. The Marine first line was crouched close to the ground in a last supreme effort to stop Kent's powerful tandem; the second line of defence filled in like a Spartan phalanx; only the ends laid out to protect the wings. Again the Kent tandem smashed into the line, but instead of Longcope having the ball, Kid Cross made a bluff to pass it to him, and himself carried it out. Straight at left end flew the Kid, and, to the amazement of the spectators, he ran plumb into that player's arms; just before the impact, however, the Kid tossed the ball neatly over the end's head straight on out, and it

THE STORY OF A

settled into Randolph's arms, that player having followed fast on the Kid's tracks. There was no one to oppose the runner, and he circled in behind the goal. The play was beautifully worked, and the Kid's cunning toe scored the other point.

With fifteen minutes left to play, with the score 6 to 0 against them, the Marines took the side with the wind in their backs, and started in fighting desperately to hammer out a victory. They kept the ball in Kent's territory most of this half, but the wind had slackened up a bit, and Gibson's punts were good for forty yards. One of them was muffed, and recovered by Phillips toward the end of the game, thus robbing the Marines of their last hope to tie the score.

It was a jolly crowd that rode back to Carwell Hall in the Kent 'buses after the game was over. The coaches were espe-

FOOTBALL SEASON

cially pleased, and Coach Owens remarked to big Hefflefoot:

“Now for Prairie University with a clear record. Only one more battle before we meet Sussex. This victory to-day will have a splendid effect on the minds of the men. Nick O'Connor tells me that they are all right physically; all they needed was a victory like this.”

“It seems to me I saw my old friend Lewin,” said Hefflefoot. “He was over on the Marine side lines. I played against him for three years.”

“Well, you're right,” said Coach Owens. “He is still on our trail, and moreover, he has been to every one of our games this season. They seem to have selected him especially to make a study of our team. He's pretty bright, too, you know.”

“Yes, he's a good man on defence,”

THE STORY OF A

said Hefflefoot. "Who did Sussex play to-day?"

"They went up to Stony Point to meet the Soldiers. We had Mitchell and Harry Wilder up there watching them; Mitchell is not a very good coach, but he is pretty good at sizing up a team."

"I suppose we will get his report to-morrow night," said Hefflefoot.

"Yes," said Buck Owens. "By the way, let's go to the telegraph office here, and get the scores of the other games played to-day."

And so, eagerly discussing football, the two Kent coaches walked briskly down the street, by the Governor's mansion, and disappeared into the little telegraph office.

By this time the team was back to the hotel, and the players were hustling to see who could get into the baths first.

"What the dickens are you limping

FOOTBALL SEASON

about?" said Nick O'Connor, as he came up behind Kid Cross, in the hallway.

"I wrenched my knee a little bit," said the Kid.

The little trainer gulped down an ejaculation. "Let's have a look at it," he said.

After an anxious examination, he remarked with a relieved voice: "Well, Kid, it don't amount to much, but these things are dangerous, and you will have to keep off that leg for two or three days anyhow. I will bandage it with lead water and laudanum right away."

At this instant Buck Owens, followed by the giant Hefflefoot, rushed into the trainer's room, and the coach called out: "What's this I hear about the Kid? Is he hurt?"

"No, he's all right," was Nick's reply. "We'll have to rest him up a little, that's all."

FOOTBALL SEASON

“How are the rest of the men?” asked Hefflefoot.

“They’re pretty well banged and bruised up; it was a hard game to-day, but I don’t think we’ve got anything serious. Randolph sprained that bad shoulder of his again, but it don’t actually stop him, and he’s got grit enough to stand the pain all right.”

The Kent squad dined that night on their private car, and after several hours of travel arrived home weary and sore, and were royally received by the students at the quaint little station in the old college town.

CHAPTER XI.

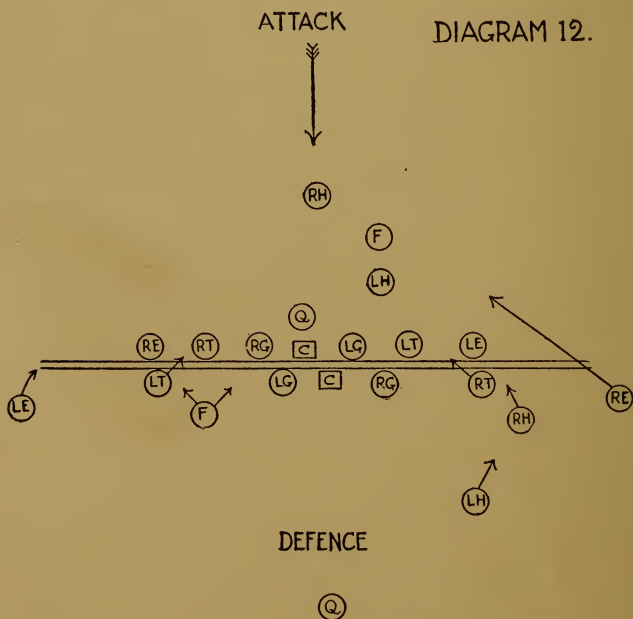
ON Monday afternoon no regular practice was attempted. Coach Owens lined up the Varsity and Scrub in position, the Varsity being on defence, and the Scrub on attack.

“Now, fellows,” began Coach Owens, “Prairie University uses various shifts on attack, and to-day I am going to discuss defence for these shifts. The Prairie quarter gives a signal, and then, an instant before the ball is snapped, the shift is suddenly made, hoping to catch the defence unawares. If you should keep your simple defence formation against a shifted attack, they would have you at their mercy.”

The coaches lined up the two teams as shown in diagram 12.

THE STORY OF A

“This is the simplest shift,” he said; “the back field is moved to one side or the other, the line remaining in regular posi-



DEFENCE FOR 'RIGHT FORMATION.'

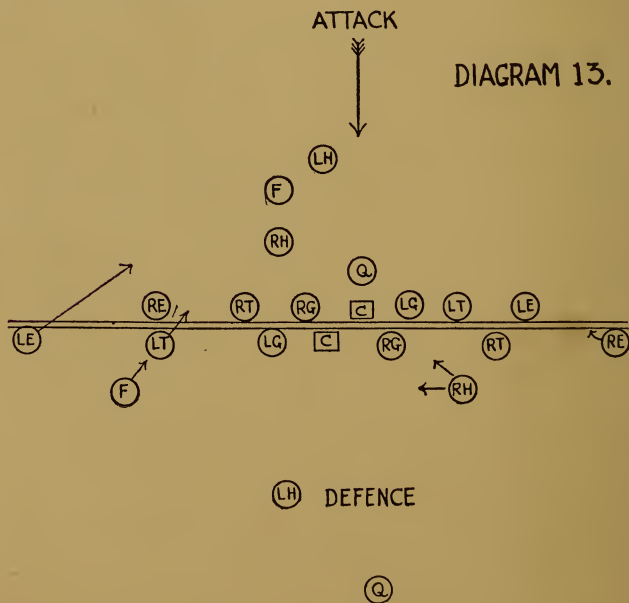
tion. You will note that the attacking back field is shifted to your right. Now, as soon as you see that shift, I want some-

FOOTBALL SEASON

body to yell 'right formation.' There are two conclusions immediately to be drawn by the defence; the first is that no run is apt to be made around the defence's left end; and the second, that with a right foot kicker there is not apt to be a punt from this formation. Our five centre men shift half a man to the right; the full back shifts back of right tackle; the right half back keeps his position just outside of right tackle; the left half back, who is Gibson in this case, moves over to the right; the quarter back comes up to about twenty-five yards back of centre. The instant the ball is snapped, the right end shoots across quickly; the right half back goes in hard the instant he sizes up which way the play is going; the left half watches for forward passes to the right and backs up; the left end, who remains out about five yards, and a yard back of the line of scrim-

THE STORY OF A

mage, stays out there and watches the opposing right end, to see that he does not move out for a forward pass or an on-side



DEFENCE FOR 'LEFT FORMATION.'

kick; the full back looks out for cross bucks, and backs up all along the line."

To illustrate the defence for left for-

FOOTBALL SEASON

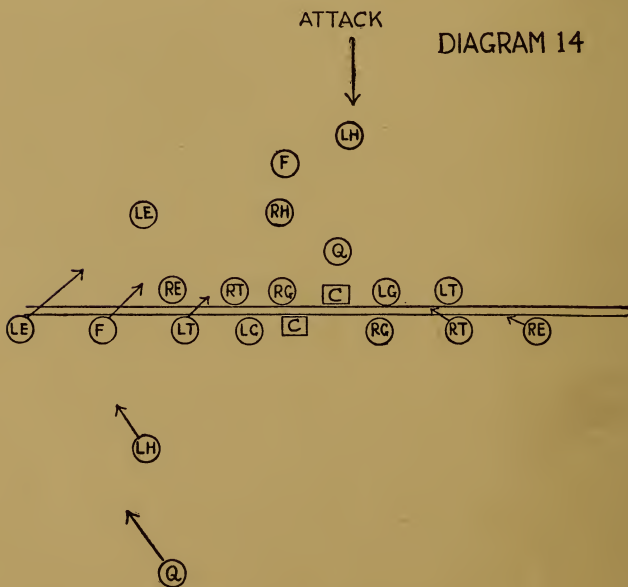
mation, Coach Owens lined up the two teams as shown in diagram 13.

“With a right foot kicker,” explained the coach, “a punt must be expected from this formation, so therefore Cross must play well back; and also Gibson must play in his usual position, but a little to the left of centre, fifteen yards back; the full back lays outside of tackle; the left end goes in hard to smash into the play; the right half back moves over between his tackle and guard about a yard back of the line, watches for cross bucks, and backs up all along; the right end plays five yards out, and a little back, watching for forward passes. In this way he takes the responsibility off of Gibson for forward passes on that side, and leaves him free to back up more sharply to the left.”

The two teams were next lined up as in diagram 14.

THE STORY OF A

“This, from our standpoint, is ‘end-over left,’” said Coach Owens. “As soon as someone yells this, the whole team



DEFENCE FOR 'END-OVER LEFT.'

should know exactly what to expect and what to do. In these end-over plays, you are not afraid of punts, so the quarter back can safely sneak up a little the instant

FOOTBALL SEASON

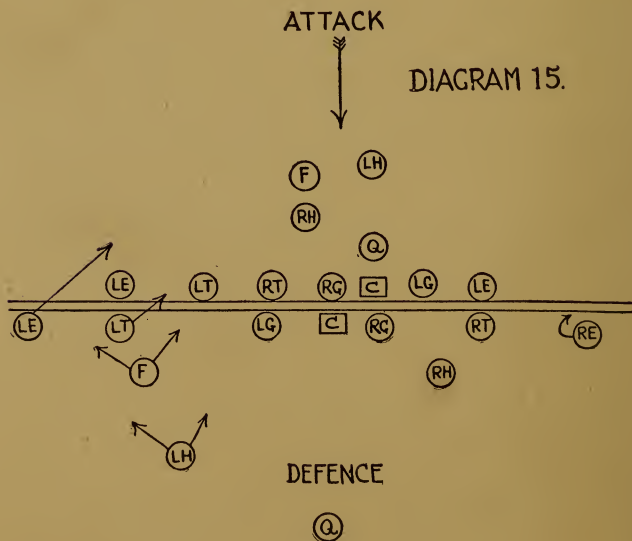
before the ball is put in play. The three centre men shift a half space to the left; also the right tackle comes in a little bit, because he has no opposing end to box him, and he must play to stop cross bucks; the right half back comes in a little; the right end plays just outside of tackle, and watches that a forward pass is n't made to the opposing left tackle, because, as that player is on the end of the line, he is eligible to receive a forward pass; the left end crosses a little and keeps the shifted opposing left end off with straight arms, watching for the runner; he follows the shifted end out for forward passes. The full back shoots through and dives under the interference instantly; the left half back concentrates almost his whole attention to defending the left side.

“The defence for ‘end-over right’ is simply vice versa.”

THE STORY OF A

The two teams were next lined up as in diagram 15.

“This is ‘tackle-over left,’” said Coach Owens. “You may expect a punt in this



DEFENCE FOR 'TACKLE-OVER LEFT.'

formation. All five centre men shift a full space to the left; the right end stays out and back of the line of scrimmage a little

FOOTBALL SEASON

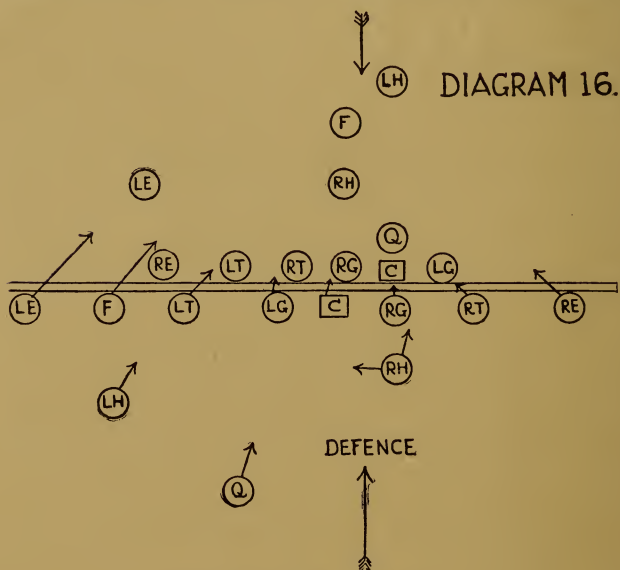
way, watching for fakes; the right half back plays just back between his right guard and tackle; the full back plays a little bit back and outside of his left tackle; the left half back moves over to the left; and the full back watches the opposing right end, as well as the back field. If the opposing right end starts out as if to receive a forward pass, the full back blocks him."

Diagram 16 shows the line-up for what is termed "big shift left."

"In this," said Coach Owens, after the two teams had been arranged properly, "the opposing left tackle and left end are shifted over, the tackle coming in the line outside of his tackle, and the left end outside of his right end, and a little back. Our right end moves in to help stop the cross bucks and the plays around his end; he must never get drawn in too much. The

THE STORY OF A

five centre men shift over just one man;
the full back moves up on the line just out-
side of tackle; the left end moves in about



DEFENCE FOR 'BIG SHIFT LEFT.'

two and a half yards outside of full back;
the instant the ball is snapped both these
men charge across hard, directly at the
opposing players; the right half back is

FOOTBALL SEASON

moved well over back of centre; the left half back moves well over to the left; and the quarter back over to the left.

“This big shift,” continued Coach Owens, “brings such a mass of interference against you, that you must go at it quickly, and pile it up; because if it once gets under way with a big momentum, it is very hard to stop. The object of the full back, left end, and left tackle is to charge forward solid, not to pass the opponents, but into them, blocking and mixing up everything possible.”

For a full half hour Coach Owens drilled the two teams in these formations. Coach Wilding of the Scrub took that eleven aside and arranged signals for the different shifts; then they lined up against the Varsity, and at a given signal would spring into a certain shift formation. Someone on the Varsity would then in-

THE STORY OF A

stantly yell "big shift right," "left formation," "end-over left," "end-over right," or whatever the shift might be; and instantly the Varsity side would spring into proper formation for defence. And then the coach quizzed every man as to his duties, and all possibilities of attack were discussed.

This work interested the men greatly. Kid Cross and two or three other cripples followed the practice, limping along with the help of crutches and canes.

That night the blackboard discussion of the same thing was gone over, and the next afternoon the Scrub was coached by Wilding to work various plays and forward passes from the various shift formations, so that the Varsity on Wednesday would be enabled to go into scrimmage practice against these formations. The practice was secret throughout this week, and on

FOOTBALL SEASON

Wednesday the Varsity side, with Rudge in the place of Cross, and with two or three other substitutes, went through a lively half hour's scrimmage with the Scrub. For fifteen minutes the Scrub gained ground against the Varsity with the shift attack. Their strongest plays seemed to be the cross buck from "end-over" formations, and a forward pass to the strong side from the "big shifted" formations.

On Thursday there was twenty minutes' signal practice, and a half hour's work at the rudiments, such as falling on the ball, going down under kicks, individual interference, tackling the dummy, etc. Then the practice wound up with a fast fifteen minute scrimmage.

On Friday afternoon the big Western aggregation of footballers from Prairie University arrived in a neighboring city,

THE STORY OF A

and practiced on local grounds. Coach Owens took the Kent squad out for a cross-country walk, and two miles away from college on a level field spent a half hour in practicing signals and the shifted defences. The men all came back feeling in great shape and good spirits. The Prairie University footballers were the conquerers of the West, and had come on, followed by a big aggregation of rooters, to show the effete East what the mighty West could do in football. Their faithful band of rooters had great wads of money to place on them. It was quickly snapped up, for Shorty Richards, an ex-quarter back of Kent, who lived in Prairie, had tipped his friends off that Kent would win. These friends had told others, and the result was that the Westerners found the Eastern backers full of money and confidence. Prairie University had been

FOOTBALL SEASON

running up big scores on her opponents, and used a whirlwind style of play that was confidently expected to sweep the Kent eleven off its feet like a Kansas cyclone.

CHAPTER XII.

THE next afternoon, when Kent's mascot bulldog, clad in a blue blanket, was led up and down the side lines on Cooper Field, the grand-stands were a brilliant mass of color and life, for a great crowd had thronged to see the much heralded battle of the East and the West. It was an ideal day for football; the sky was overcast, and a gentle breeze blew across the field, but it was not too cold, and there was little need for blankets and foot-warmers. The long benches on the side lines were crowded with experts, on hand to size up the Western cyclone. Reports of the various shifted formation attacks had been circulated abroad, and although the teams in the East used them to a certain extent, Prairie had built up almost her entire sys-

FOOTBALL SEASON

tem of attack on these formations, and the eleven had worked the shifts with a precision and quickness which had non-plussed all opponents.

At 2 o'clock sharp, the Kent squad scampered out on the field. The great wave of sound, which greeted their appearance, had hardly subsided, before the Prairie warriors appeared; they were a big husky bunch, and looked older than their Eastern opponents.

The toss was made, and Kent got the kick-off. Gibson drove the sphere down to goal; it was caught and rushed back, and on the twenty yard line there was a crash and a pile up, and the game was on. Prairie instantly punted, and Kid Cross caught on his fifty yard line. His first play was a fake kick, which had been devised especially for the Prairie defence for kicks, and which worked perfectly for

THE STORY OF A

twenty yards. There was no forward pass in it, but simply an old-fashioned run. Then by a most startling variety of daring plays, in which everything seemed to work successfully, almost before the spectators were well settled in their seats, Kent had the ball down close to Prairie's goal. It was first down, when Cross fell back for a drop kick. Prairie evidently expected a run, so the Kid was not hurried. Deliberately taking his time, he dropped the ball to the ground, met it with his toe the instant it raised, and the sphere sailed prettily over the cross bars. The astonished rooters burst into a whirlwind of joyous yells. It was first blood for Kent, and the whole thing had been planned before the game by the coaches. It was a daring policy all through, but the scouts who had watched Prairie play throughout the season had reported that the Westerners had been so

FOOTBALL SEASON

used to winning and having things their own way, that a set-back at the start might take their nerve. From his fifty yard line down the field, the Kid had used every trick that he knew, and the crowning achievement of trying the drop kick on the first down was against all of the usual principles of attack.

The effect of this early score soon began to make itself evident in the play of the two teams. Everything that Prairie tried seemed to go wrong. The rapid fire attack of Kent had surprised the Westerners. The Kent line on defence played like fiends, and the backs darted in to back up with beautiful precision. Gibson seemed always on hand to nail the attempted forward passes; and the work of the fast Kent ends, sometimes darting in like a flash, and at other times laying out, nonplussed the Prairie back field. But for over-eager-

THE STORY OF A

ness, Kent would have scored again in the first half, but her line men were penalized three times for off-side play. Gibson was punting beautifully and placing his kicks well, and it seemed but a question of time when one of Kent's ends would secure one of these well placed punts. When the whistle blew at the end of the first half, the final result seemed a foregone conclusion, for the Easterners had all the best of the play. The big shifts of Prairie eleven had never been allowed to get well started, and every move of the attack was met promptly with a corresponding move by the defence. Everyone expected to see Prairie come out with something new in the second half, for her most trusted formations had been battered to pieces. The Westerners, however, seemed to have nothing new to offer in the second half, and it was not very much trouble for Kent to score twice again.

FOOTBALL SEASON

Once the Westerners were forced to punt from behind their goal line. Cross made a fair catch well to the side, and on about the forty yard mark. Amidst the silence of the thousands, the Kid lay on the ground, and held the ball for Gibson, who quietly sighted it, and adjusted it until it was aimed true for goal. He walked back a little way, and then, taking three quick steps forward, drove his toe into the ball, which rose like a shot and sailed long and true, splitting the cross bar. The kick would have scored from ten yards further back. This made the score 8 to 0 in favor of Kent; and with ten minutes to play, and with Prairie visibly weakening under the tireless onslaught, Kid Cross drove his team, from the middle of the field, down over goal, in a masterly series of plays.

The runs in the early morning air had kept the Kent players in magnificent

THE STORY OF A

shape, and they seemed to finish the game stronger than they started. Kent, by the fierceness of her play, her systematic attack, and splendid spirit, had completely crushed the Western team. The players were a jubilant bunch, when they went back to the training house to take their shower baths; there were no injuries among the men, but it was evident they had been through a hard gridiron battle. Shorty Richards came into the quarters, and jumping up on a rubbing down table, yelled for silence.

“Say, fellows,” he cried, “I want to thank you from my heart for beating this Western crowd to-day. You put it all over them, and there’s nothing to it. You will be the greatest bunch of football players in the country, if you only beat Sussex. I live out West, and I have had it rubbed into me now for three years how much bet-

FOOTBALL SEASON

ter they were than the East. Well, you showed them."

A little later he went up to Nick O'Connor and said: "Hello, Nick, Kid Cross came out of the game all right, did n't he?"

"Yes, he's all right," grunted Nick.

"Well, according to the papers before the game," said Richards, "it looked to me as if the Kid's leg had been twisted clean off."

"You know, Shorty, what the newspapers are, and you know, also, that many a player reported to be on the verge of his grave comes out and plays the huskiest kind of a game. You're going to be with us this week, aren't you?"

"Sure," was the reply. "You don't suppose I am going to leave now. There will be a lot of us here the next two weeks. There's Johnny Roe; he's coming all the way from the gold fields of Nevada. He's

FOOTBALL SEASON

been making a lot of money out there. I got a letter from him this morning, in which he says, 'The gold mine can go to the devil. I'm coming on to the Sussex game.' "

"Well, that's the spirit," said Nick.

"I'm so excited over that Sussex game," continued Richards, "that every time I hear it mentioned, it sets my heart a beating fit to burst."

"Well, that's all right," grunted the little trainer; "but keep it to yourself. Don't show it to any of these lads in here; it might keep 'em awake at nights."

CHAPTER XIII.

It is now but two weeks before the great final battle of the season. Sussex had won every game she had played, and so had Kent, and when the two teams should meet, it was for the championship. In the rival camps expectancy was at fever heat; both teams went into secret practice behind closed gates. This was a great disappointment to the loyal Kent rooters, who had every day sat on the bleachers and watched the practice of their favorites with the intensest interest. Recognizing this fact, Coach Owens had the gates opened for the students on certain days, when nothing special was to be done. A horde of coaches was on hand, but no late comer was allowed to coach until he had attended the councils, and had been as-

THE STORY OF A

signed his duties. Hefflefoot, who was one of the greatest experts in the country in making holes in the line, was given fifteen minutes on the line men every day. Hankie, famous ex-end, spent part of the time each afternoon teaching the ends how to get by the opponents sent to prevent them from going down the fields under kicks.

On Monday night after dinner the whole squad was summoned together in the training house for a football lecture. There were twelve coaches, beside the regular squad, present on this occasion; for the head coach had quietly announced his intention of showing the men the new play which he had saved up all the season for Sussex.

“Well, fellows,” said Coach Owens, as he came out on the platform before the blackboard, “we’re on the home stretch.

FOOTBALL SEASON

We've got to beat Sussex, and when you do, you will all be heroes around here; your names will go down to tradition in Kent College. We will have some pretty stiff work on the field this week, but next week the practice will be very light. Tonight I am going to show you a new play."

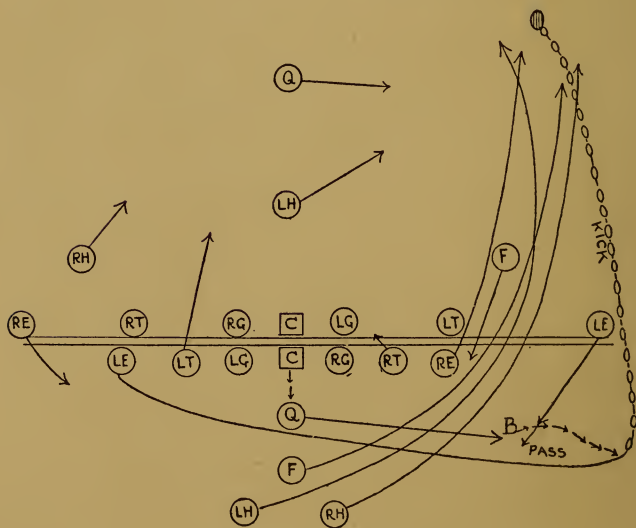
The coach then drew diagram 17 on the blackboard.

"I have always had in my mind, that if you could delay getting off your kick until you had three or four men down the field, you would then be not only sure of making a good gain, but that the chances would be in favor of your recovering the ball; because, as you know, under the new rules a kick from behind scrimmage is anybody's ball, after it hits the ground. I have had Randolph, our left end, at practice taking the ball on full run, and then

THE STORY OF A

stopping and suddenly kicking a long low kick. He has improved very much in his kicking, and is now good for anywhere

DIAGRAM 17.



SKIDDOO ON-SIDE KICK.

from thirty-five to forty yards with a low kick, which should roll after it hits the ground. This play exactly resembles the first 'skiddoo' play, except that when our

FOOTBALL SEASON

left end receives the ball from the quarter back on a pass, instead of passing forward he takes as much time as he can, and then sends a long low kick down the field. In this way, the three backs, the right end, and the left tackle should all be well down under the kick, by the time it is sent off. The opposing left half back must come in to stop what looks like a run off tackle, so he is out of the way. The instant the ball hits the ground, which it will very soon do, if it is kicked low, our men down the field have a right to block off any opponent. As we hope to have more men down the field than they will have, it looks as if the chances would be in our favor. Of course, there are other ways of delaying the punt, but we will adopt this particular one."

On Tuesday the Varsity tried this play on the Scrub, and although the latter knew what was coming, it worked several times

THE STORY OF A

successfully. The men were all enthusiastic about it.

After practice that afternoon, Manager Haskins came up to Coach Owens, and taking him aside, said:

“Buck, there is an ugly rumor come out lately, that Sussex is planning to do Kid Cross up, and put him out of the game. The whole college is up in arms about it. The story came from some friends of ours over in Sussex. Do you think it will worry the Kid any?”

“Bah!” laughed Coach Owens; “it will have about as much effect on him as water on a duck’s back. I don’t believe it is true at all. It has been circulated, I guess, to rattle us, but we’ll make a boomerang out of it.”

“Well, from what I can hear,” said Haskins, “there is more truth in the rumor than you seem to think.”

FOOTBALL SEASON

That night in the training house the Cross brothers, Lawson, and Fred Deering were sitting in the room of the last named, talking football.

"They tell me they are going to do you up, Kid," said Lawson, winking at the others.

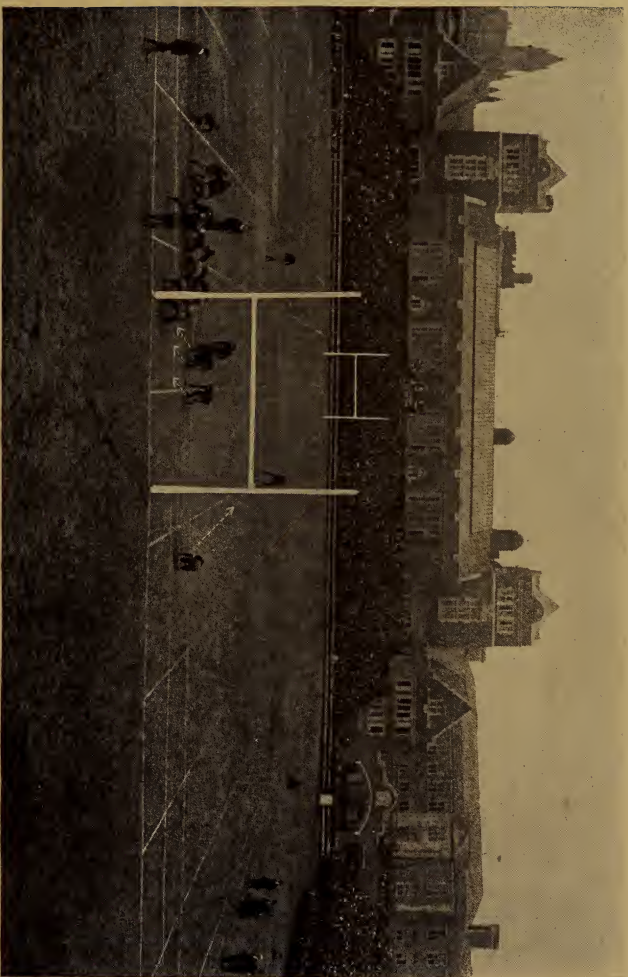
"They are, are they?" said the Kid. "Well, it's news to me, anyhow. They are welcome to try."

After young Cross had gone out, his older brother said:

"There might be something in this, boys; one of us will have to keep near the Kid in that game. His knee is not any too strong, and I guess Sussex knows it."

CHAPTER XIV.

IT was the last practice on Cooper Field, and in the cold dusk a bonfire was burning brightly under the south goal. Around the blaze stood the football squad in an inner circle. They were solemnly taking off their old shin guards and other articles of worn-out football armor, and casting them into the fire. Surrounding them stood many hundreds of students, watching this annual ceremony, that always marked the last day of practice before the Sussex game. When the blaze was at its highest, Coach Owens made a little speech, thanking the Scrub for its faithful work in giving the Varsity practice throughout the hard season. Then the pent-up enthusiasm that thrills the breast of an under-graduate when the day of the



A PUNT FROM BEHIND GOAL, SHOWING HOW A FORWARD PASS MIGHT BE MADE TO THE RIGHT END, THE OTHER SIDE EVIDENTLY NOT EXPECTING SUCH A RISKY PLAY IN THIS POSITION

FOOTBALL SEASON

great game is near burst forth on Cooper Field, and wild cheers were given for every member of the team and the coaches, winding up with a long hurrah for the Scrub.

On the afternoon of the next day, which was Thursday, the whole Kent football army was comfortably quartered at Wentworth Inn, two miles outside of the old college town of Sussex, almost within sight of the camp of the enemy which they had come to conquer. Every man was in good shape, trained up to the minute, and confidence ran high.

On Friday afternoon the team went through all of its signals on the spacious lawns of the inn. Nick O'Connor, fearing spies, had put out a cordon of sentinels a mile in circumference. "Gracious!" said Kid Cross to his big brother, when they were dressing after the practice, "but

THE STORY OF A

these two weeks have certainly flown by. It hardly seems any time since we played Prairie."

"Yes," was the reply, "and by this time to-morrow afternoon, we will either be feeling like heroes or disgusted with life."

The Kid had a far-away look in his eyes, as he said, "I never before realized what it means to win a great football game. I had a letter from sister to-day, saying that she and the governor will be on hand to-morrow. She will be broken-hearted if we don't win."

"Yes, and don't forget the governor either," said big Cross. "He would be broken-hearted, too. He is awfully proud of you, Kid. You've got to live up to your reputation to-morrow."

It was some time that night before the little quarter back settled into the healthful sleep of the athlete in perfect condi-

FOOTBALL SEASON

tion. The swift events of the last two weeks were a hazy memory, and the bonfire under the south goal a weird dream; but in his mind the coming battle was intensely vivid, and already he could hear the hoarse shouts of the multitude and feel the thrill of conflict. Aroused and excited, he raised on his arm and gazed out in the darkness, at the reflected lights of the distant town. Then he heard sounds under his window, and a voice strangely like Johnny Roe's called:

"Come on, Shorty. The team's safe in bed. Let's go in town and see what's doing. I am going to bet a few yellow Tonopah semoleons on this bunch, because they are winners. See?"

Then, comforted, the Kid went off into a dreamland full of goals, touchdowns, muffs, and tackles.

CHAPTER XV.

THE Kent players were in the dressing rooms assigned to them in the quarters back of the great east stand. Everything was bustle and preparation; Nick O'Connor busily bandaging weak joints, and the coaches going from man to man giving them last words of advice and warning.

Some of the men who wore less football armor than the others were already dressed and lying on their backs resting. A man over in a corner was laughing nervously and biting his nails; another was swearing under his breath at a shoe-string that persisted in breaking. Big Lawson was storming around like a bull in his pen, and Kid Cross sat with his elbows on his knees and his head resting in his hands. There was fierce and subdued tensi-ty in the at-

FOOTBALL SEASON

mosphere of these dressing rooms in the last few minutes before the fateful hour towards which all of their faithful work, nervous energy, and mental strain had aimed.

Outside, on Sussex Field, the good-natured multitude, gathered from far and near, was pouring through the various entrances, and down the broad promenades, and up into and gradually filling the giant stands. The ground was already muddy under foot, as from the tramping of armies.

Out on the side lines, sitting on the low benches inside the fence, or standing around with chins deep in overcoat collars, were scores of old players, gods of other days. They were exchanging expert comment, and discussing the wind and the condition of the ground, and sometimes calling a "Hello, old man," greeting to a

THE STORY OF A

friend in the stand. The long line of brass-lunged cheer leaders was out there, too, getting their big megaphones in order. Innumerable automobile horns, the shrill "Buy your winning colors" cry of the hawkers, and the blare of the rival bands, accompanied by tooting horns, made a din that arose from without and within. The American out-door girl, at her very best, was there, open-eyed and animated with excitement; the college sport; the old grad who never misses a game; the rooter who knows it all; the anxious-faced chaperone hunting her lost; the man who is always yelling "Down in front," and nudging his neighbors; the school-boy who dearly hopes some day to be a hero, too. They were all there, and many more besides.

The officials walked out on the field and conferred, and the cheer leaders began to get busy. The many men on the side lines

FOOTBALL SEASON

settled down in their seats and every one in the vast multitude waited for the appearance of the rival teams at the little gates at either end of the field.

In the training quarters Coach Owens stood, with his hand on Kid Cross's shoulder; the players were gathered in a group to listen to the last words of their coach.

"Well, boys," began Coach Owens, in a voice almost broken with emotion, "this is the end of all of our efforts. We've worked hard together this season, and we've been successful. Now comes the crowning chance of your lives. This team that you play to-day has had the same success that you have had, and we know that they are the hardest proposition that you have yet met. Down in my heart I know that you can beat them, if you play as you know how to play. In these big football

THE STORY OF A

battles the players sometimes seem filled with superhuman force and activity, and play beyond themselves. You must do this to-day. You must play even better than you know how to play. Never quit for one second, but play yourselves to a standstill; remember that if one of you is hurt, or done up, there is another just as good, and anxious to take your place. You all love Kent, boys. Well, play for the dear old place to-day; play for the rooters, the boys who have stood nobly by you all through the season, and who think you are the greatest heroes on earth; play for your families, your sisters, and your sweethearts, if you have any; and if you can't play for any of these, well, play for me, boys." Here the coach's voice broke. "Play for me, because I am with you heart and soul."

"We'll do it; we'll beat 'em; come on,

FOOTBALL SEASON

let's get at 'em," came from various determined voices in response to the last appeal of the coach, and the light of enthusiasm that makes men fight their best came into the eyes of the men in these last tense moments.

"Everybody out," suddenly called Nick O'Connor.

This was a joyful sound to the men, for waiting is agony at such a time, and the clatter of the cleated shoes on the wooden floor was the only sound as they tramped silently out to their entrance gate.

"Here they come," cried a voice; "here they come," echoed on down the stand. Those on the way to their seats turned to look. The vociferous welcome grew into a roar of organized cheers. Then the Kent squad, led by their tall captain, scampered out on the field tossing the ball about and falling on it with unnecessary viciousness.

THE STORY OF A

The Kid's sensations as he trotted out with his comrades, for this was his first really great game, were dimmed by their very intensity. In a dazed way he saw the great multitude rise to greet the players, and the bright color spots in the dull moving bank fluttered in his eyes strangely. The roar, which increased in volume, as twenty thousand throats took it up, was only a confused sense of something overwhelming in the Kid's ears. At that instant a football rolled in front of him, and he made a fierce dive for it, as if it was a long lost friend coming to comfort him. The familiar feel of the pig-skin instantly removed the clutch from the little fellow's heart, and he was the same old Kid again,—perfect master of himself, cool as ice; and from then on he dimly knew that the multitude was there, but its presence and its noise meant nothing to

FOOTBALL SEASON

him except that his father and his little sister were in Section L.

Then the other team loomed giant-like at the other end of the field, and tumult began in the West Stand. The rival multitudes were trying to smother each other's cheers, and the cheer leaders down on the field below them were writhing and swaying in fanatical efforts to extract the greatest volume of sound from the throats at their command. These cheer leaders are not good enough to play for their alma mater, but they can cheer for her. Their zeal is beautiful to see, and they look easily capable of dying martyrs to the cause of organized noise. Then, in a momentary spirit of sporting etiquette, each rival clan gives a cheer for the other, and for a frail space of time they feel a glow of friendship.

It was a dull gray day, with a bite in the

THE STORY OF A

air which had brought forth many a rug and whiskey flask. There was very little wind stirring, and the field was fast. Captain Gibson tossed a blade of grass up to find which way the wind was blowing. The umpire called aside each team and gave them warning lectures. Then the referee and the rival captains gathered for the toss of the coin.

Captain Dudley, of Sussex, was a brilliant little quarter back who had been chosen for the All-American team of the year before. He won the choice and chose the north goal. As he walked by the Kid he gave him a sneering look of triumph, and said in a low voice:

“You’ll get what’s coming to you to-day.”

The Kid smiled blandly in answer, and the two little field generals walked on to their positions.

FOOTBALL SEASON

Sussex had a slight wind in her favor, but Captain Gibson elected to kick off. He had learned to send the ball so high that his men could get down under it easily. He teed the ball on a little mound of dirt, and, with a parting admonition to his players to keep on-side, he quickly stepped up and swung his long leg. The ball rose to a surprising height, hung in the air for a second, and then dropped in the arms of one of the Sussex players on his ten yard line. That player was off like a shot, and the interference formed automatically. Before he had gone ten yards, however, Randolph darted through and staggered him with a flying tackle. An instant later Lawson and Deering landed on him together, and the first scrimmage of the historic battle was on.

It was first down for Sussex on her twenty yard line. Quick as a flash her

THE STORY OF A

team lined up; the ball was snapped to Thornton, the left half back, and with a wide swing of his leg he drove a low sailing punt down the field, well off to the left. The play was so quickly executed that it caught Kid Cross off his guard. He sprang in the air for the ball, but missed it, and it went rolling on down the field. To the Kent rooters it seemed as if it would never stop. The Kid, closely pursued by the Sussex ends, finally fell on the ball on his thirty yard line. On the very next play Kent was penalized fifteen yards for off-side play by the over-anxious Tomlinson, and the referee put Kent back on her fifteen yard line. There was nothing left to do but to punt out of danger, and Gibson drove the ball back to the centre of the field, where Dudley caught it and rushed in to the forty-five yard line. The next few minutes were sad ones for

FOOTBALL SEASON

old Kent's rooters. Captain Dudley and his giants took the ball down the field in desperate line smashing, varied once with a clever forward pass to the left end. There seemed to be no stopping them. When they got to the twenty-five yard line, Kent's back field closed in, and the whole defence concentrated. The effect of this soon began to show, and on the eighteen yard line, well off to the side, it was third down, with three to gain. Here it was that Sussex showed her lack of nerve. Instead of taking a chance of gaining the three yards, Dudley decided to try for a drop kick. Si Lawson broke through like a fiend, blocked the kick, and Phillips fell on the ball on Kent's forty yard line.

A great sigh of relief went up from the East Stand, and Jim Mowbray, who according to his custom at such times was

THE STORY OF A

stalking up and down the side lines cursing softly to himself, suddenly broke into a smile, walked up to Buck Owens, and slapped him on the back and remarked, "We've got 'em now, old boy."

Everything had gone in favor of Sussex, and now the complexion of affairs was changed. It was here that the Kid took a hand in the afternoon's happenings, and his big voice rang like a call to arms as he signalled for Gibson to go in on a straight buck. The next play was a "skiddoo" to the left. It worked like a charm, and the ball was beyond the centre of the field. Phillips, the right end, had made a daisy pass directly into the arms of Butler, the full back, who was down the field with the "bunch." A quick right tackle shift, followed by a dash inside of right end, failed to gain; and an attempted "single" forward pass to the left



CARRYING BACK A PUNT AND SHOWING CORRECT WAY TO HOLD THE BALL.

FOOTBALL SEASON

end hit the ground. When Randolph had attempted to sneak out to get the throw he was nabbed by the Sussex right end, who was evidently alert for just such plays.

The referee put the Kent team back fifteen yards to the centre of the field, and Gibson's long kick fell into the opposing quarter back's arms on the Sussex ten yard line. Thornton, the great Sussex kicker, immediately punted the ball out of danger, and the Kid stood steady under the twister on his fifty yard line. It was a beautiful kick, and it was beautifully caught. Right here came one of those plays which for years past have won our great college football battles, and which make football stars whose names are handed down in college history.

As the ball settled into the Kid's arms he was off like a flash. Gibson blocked

THE STORY OF A

one of the on-coming Sussex ends, and the Kid dodged the other. Five yards further on with ever-increasing speed he swerved by the Sussex left tackle. Next, he shot by a guard whom Butler was partly blocking. Two more white marks went under the Kid's swiftly moving feet, and then he swerved wide to the right, avoiding a striving mass of Sussex players, among whom Lawson, Deering, and Tomlinson had jumped like a bunch of wildcats in their efforts to aid the Kid by blocking them off. Phillips and Randolph now headed the interference, and the whole team turned in to help. Once the Kid was brought down by a flying tackle from behind, but he was up and off again. The delay, however, proved fatal, and the great dash ended on Sussex's twenty yard line, where Dudley made the tackle.

It was a magnificent run, and it brought

FOOTBALL SEASON

the multitude on the East Stand to its feet, crazy with delight. It seemed to take the heart out of Sussex, for on the next play Butler, the Kent full back, went crashing through a hole in the line made by Lawson.

A cross buck by the same player made the first down on the ten yard line; a couple more heavy smashes took it to the three yard line. Here a Sussex man was hurt, or feigned to be hurt, so as to give his team time to gather themselves together. Instantly Gibson called his men back together, and in the centre of the little circle he and Kid Cross stood.

"Now, men," panted the captain, "for heaven's sake don't use your hands, or make any foul here; we must take the ball over; we've got 'em where we want 'em."

"What signal are you going to give, Kid?" he continued.

THE STORY OF A

“It will be a left tackle shift; and Harding on a cross buck, between Lawson and Cross.”

“That’s the play,” said Captain Gibson, gritting his teeth. “Listen, men; we all know this play. Don’t forget to walk up to the line in a shifted position, and the instant the referee blows his whistle the ball will be snapped without any signal.”

“Two minutes up,” cried the referee.

The Sussex man, who was hurt, rose slowly to his feet, and fell into line with the rest of his team. The Kent eleven walked deliberately up to the line of scrimmage; and when they arrived there, Tomlinson, the right tackle, was shifted over beside Deering, the left tackle. At that instant the referee was asking each captain in turn if he was ready, and a second later he blew his whistle. The toot of the whistle was the signal for the ball to be snapped.

FOOTBALL SEASON

The Sussex team had just time to note the shift of their opponents, and it caused an instant's hesitation in the concentration of their defence. In that fatal instant, however, the ball was snapped, and a powerful triple tandem bored into the hole started by Lawson's mighty shoulders, as he charged low and heaved into his powerful opponent. The mass wavered for an instant, and then went crashing on over, and never stopped until it was five yards beyond the goal line. When the toppling mass wavered on the goal line a pin could have been heard to drop in the great stands. When the mass fell forward, instantly there broke forth a volcanic delirium of joy; the long line of substitutes, coaches, and old-time players along the side lines in front of the East Stand burst forth like so many Indians into a wild war-dance, hugging each other, and throwing their hats,

FOOTBALL SEASON

blankets, and everything they could get hold of into the air. Little Johnnie Roe went up and down the side lines turning hand-springs. It was a debauch of football emotion; what had been organized cheering and singing blended into one of demoniacal frenzy of sound.

The great stand across the way drooped in sullen silence, until aroused by the undaunted cheer leaders. When Kid Cross sent the ball unerringly across the bar for the other point, and the figure 6 was put up beside the word Kent on the giant score-board, the Sussex faction had recovered, and was yelling defiance back across the field into the teeth of the triumphant Kent rooters. From this on to the end of this half the battle waged fiercely and evenly, and when the whistle blew for time, hope ran as high as ever in the hearts of the Sussex rooters.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN the Kent dressing room the players were being rubbed and sponged by the active trainer and his assistants. The lust of battle was still in their eyes, and they rested in sullen silence on the cots provided for them. No one had suffered any disabling hurt, but minor cuts and bruises gave to some of them a fierce and bloody aspect.

During the first eight minutes of the intermission Owens went from man to man giving advice and instruction. His assistants were doing likewise. With two minutes left of the ten minute intermission, Owens made every one get up and listen to what he had to say.

“Boys, we’ve got ’em now, but you will have to fight harder than ever before or

THE STORY OF A

you will lose your advantage before you know it. Go out there in this half and fight as you never imagined you could fight. If there is any let-up in your play, you will find that Sussex will get stronger every minute; but if you bang it into them right from the start, you will find that they will weaken instead of you. If you let that bunch beat you now, it will be the saddest thing ever happened to you. That's all."

Then the team warriors filed out to renew the fight. The coach walked with his arm around Kid Cross's shoulder. "Don't forget that new play," were his last words, as the team ran on the field.

From the instant that Sussex kicked off, everything seemed to be in favor of Kent. For the first fifteen minutes of play the ball was almost continuously in her possession; and most of the time the

FOOTBALL SEASON

fight was in Sussex territory, but never quite within striking distance of the goal. Suddenly there came one of those whirlwind changes that sometimes happen in football, and instantly the whole complexion of affairs was changed. There was a bad fumble, and Jones, the Sussex end, who had been following the ball like a sleuth all the game, was on it like a flash. The teams lined up; the ball was snapped; and the Sussex back field started for Kent's left end with Captain Dudley carrying the ball. Randolph made a dive for him, and Dudley passed the ball straight on over his head to his right half back. It looked as if it was going to be a regular Kent "skiddoo" pass, and the Kent secondary defence went over to intercept it. Instead, however, of making the forward pass straight down the field, the Sussex right half back, after he had gotten out

THE STORY OF A

about eight yards, turned and threw it diagonally across about thirty yards over to his left tackle, who had sneaked out and gone down the field. As the Sussex left end had stood back of the line, the tackle then being on the end had a right to receive the forward pass. The ball was accurately thrown and caught on the run, and there was no one between the runner and a touch-down but Kid Cross. The Kid had been drawn over by the trick; and as the runner kept well over toward the side line, he was forced to make a difficult side tackle. Playing it safe, he kept after his man, until he forced him out of bounds on the ten yard line. Sussex was not to be denied, and in three concentrated rushes jammed the ball over. The goal was kicked, and the score was tied.

The ball was kicked off, and the battle fiercely renewed. Sussex seemed to get

FOOTBALL SEASON

stronger every minute. Try as they would the Kent men could not do any more than hold their own around the centre of the field, and the precious time was flying. Every scrimmage was played with desperation. The lines charged into each other in a struggle to the finish. No sounds came out but the ringing commands of the signal giver or a sharp word of encouragement. There would be a grinding crash, a last powerful shove, then the mass would finally sink down, and maybe a muttered oath or a very realistic "Ouch" would be squeezed from the bottom of the pile. It was a fight to the finish, and subs were beginning to be called upon to replace injured or exhausted players. Randolph, who had been playing like a demon, was taken out by the watchful Buck Owens, and Gilbert, the promising freshman, substituted.

THE STORY OF A

“Why, look who’s here,” jeered a giant Sussex guard, as the freshman came dashing out to take his position. “We won’t do a thing to you, young man. What did you come out here for anyhow; you think this is an afternoon tea party? You’d better go back to your mother, my son.”

Sometimes a quick forward pass or a wide run would be attempted, but both sides were desperately vigilant; then there would be a punt, but the back field man make no mistakes in muffing or getting under the ball. There were only about six minutes left to play, and it looked like one of those tie games so exceedingly unsatisfactory to both sides.

Suddenly Lawson broke through and partially blocked the kick, and Gibson, of Kent, and Thornton, of Sussex, went for it in the same instant. As they lay on the ground, both hugging the ball, the referee

FOOTBALL SEASON

came up and touched Gibson on the back. The team was lined up, and, when Captain Dudley ran back to his position on defence, showing that Kent had been awarded the ball, the whole East Stand was on its feet yelling triumphantly.

“Now’s the time, Kid; here’s your chance; we want a score,” came from many voices. The cheer leaders called for a battle slogan, but Jim Mowbray rushed up and silenced them. Buck Owens stood on the side lines, his face a picture of absorbed anxiety, willing the Kid to give the right play. There was no hope of Kent winning unless in the next two minutes she could get the ball in her possession within striking distance of the Sussex goal; and with the instinct of a true general, the Kid knew there was only one way to do this, and he signalled for the new play.

The ball was snapped, the interference

THE STORY OF A

went off to the right, the Kid passed the ball over the opposing end's head into Gilbert's hands, and the latter player deliberately taking his time drove a low kick straight down the field. The instant the ball hit the ground, Phillips dove into Dudley, and Deering, Kent's trusty tackle, was seen hugging the ball on the thirty yard line, with the raging Sussex full back sitting on him. Kent at last was within striking distance of goal, and there were three minutes left to play.

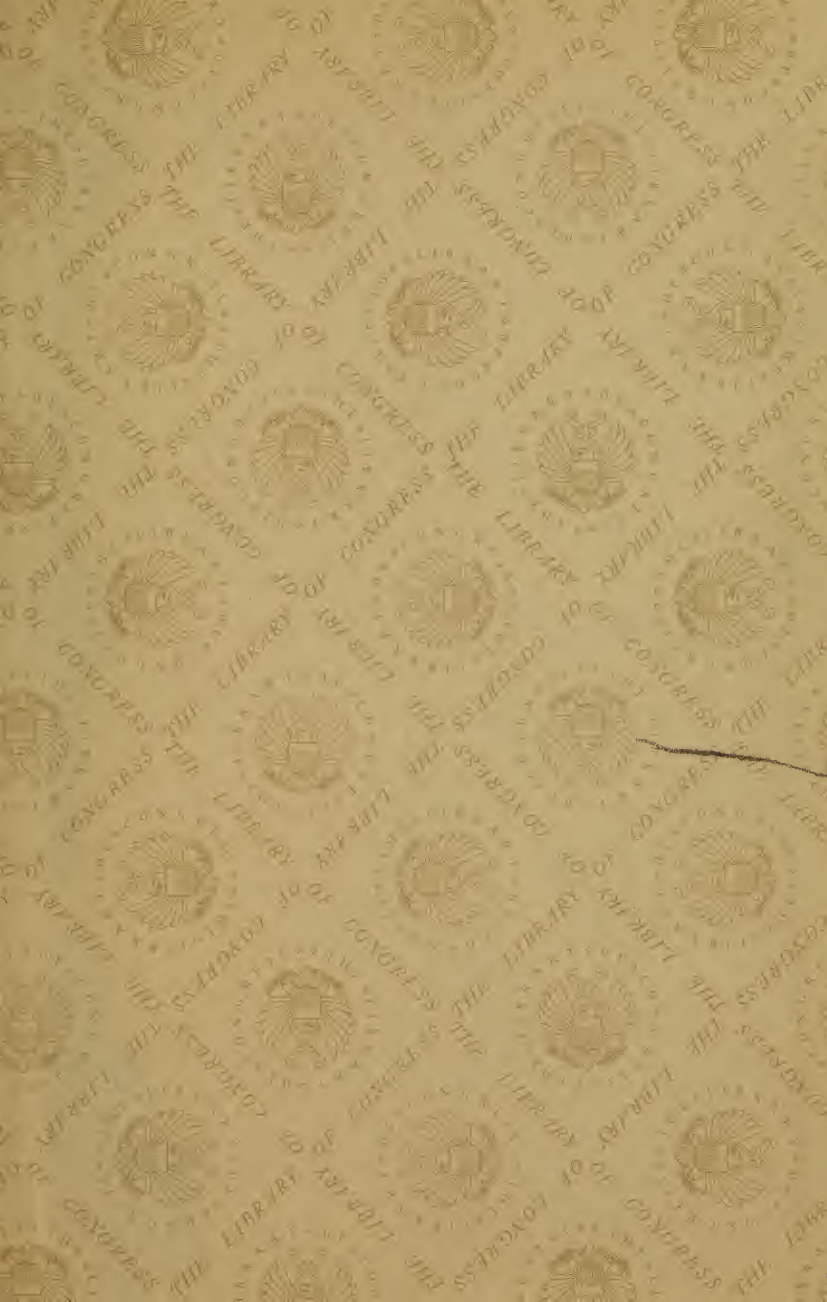
"Don't hold; keep on-side," cried Kid Cross, as he signalled for Harding's plunge through centre. Again he drove Harding into the line, and it was third down on the twenty-six yard line, and a minute left to play. The Kid signalled for a drop kick, and turned and ran back about eight yards. The instant he arrived in position, big Cross sent the ball back

FOOTBALL SEASON

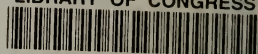
straight and true. Poising himself momentarily, the Kid deliberately stepped forward, dropped the ball in front of him, and as it hit the ground he met it neatly with his cunning toe, and it sailed into the air and over the bar.

Five minutes later, when the dazed Kid had ceased his struggle to get away, he found himself carried aloft on strong arms high above a solid moving mass of frenzied rooters, smiling foolishly; and as the victorious horde swept around the battle-scarred gridiron in triumphal march, the Kid saw the multitude in the West Stand rise silently to its feet with hats off; and then he heard the beautiful notes of a college hymn song rise and fall on the vibrant air. At the swelling sound a momentary hush fell on the cheering stand across the way. It was the respect of the victor for the vanquished.





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